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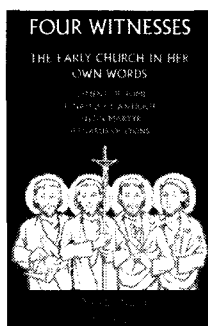
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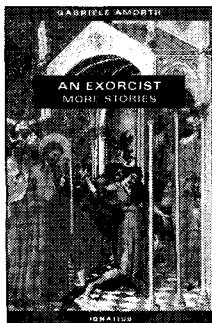
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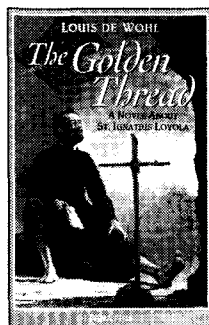


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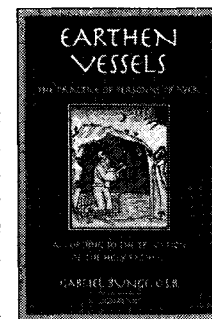
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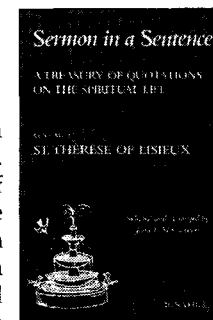
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Dostoevsky and Rome

I enjoyed Rodney Delasanta's "Dostoevsky Also Nods" (January). I also agree with Professor Delasanta on the profound depth of Dostoevsky's insight into the Christian faith. However, I'm not sure how Prof. Delasanta's arguments would ease Dostoevsky's concerns about the Church of Rome. As cited in the article, Dostoevsky's main complaint against Rome is that "it is not even a religion but very definitely the continuation of the Holy Roman Empire. . . . The Pope usurped the earth, an earthly throne, and took up the sword, and since then everything has been going that way."

While Dostoevsky would surely admire the papacy's stance against the encroachment of materialistic rationalism, his main problem with the pope was that he acted as a temporal lord rather than as the preacher of the Christ whose Kingdom is not of this world. How then does Prof. Delasanta's noting that Pope Leo faced down Attila the Hun and that Pope John Paul II helped topple the Soviet Empire alleviate such concerns? Is Prof. Delasanta not admitting that the papacy, especially the current Pope, has wielded amazing temporal power as a primary agent in bringing down one of the most powerful empires ever? And is not the wielding of such temporal power precisely what Dostoevsky hated about Rome? The enemy of my enemy can also be my enemy, and I can't see how Prof. Delasanta's arguments would help Dostoevsky see the papacy any differently.

(The Rev.) Kevin Martin
Our Savior Lutheran Church
Raleigh, North Carolina

While I enjoyed Rodney Delasanta's well-written piece on the anti-Catholicism in Dostoevsky's works, I could not help but question some of his

statements. He deserves credit for exposing the biases of a highly regarded novelist, but he perhaps did not go far enough. He describes Dostoevsky as "a great writer and a good man who understood Christianity *de profundis* and was able to transmit that understanding with an unmatched power." It is undeniable that Dostoevsky was a great writer, and he certainly was remarkably gifted in his ability to transmit his understanding of Christianity. But was his understanding of Christianity accurate? Was it really "*de profundis*?"

Professor Delasanta mentions Malcolm Muggeridge's statement that Stalin's mistake was to let the masses read Dostoevsky while denying them access to the Gospels. While I am not sure if Muggeridge meant it this way, his assessment is most accurate in how it shows the breach between the Christ of the Gospels and the Christ figures in Dostoevsky. Delasanta aptly summarizes the "Grand Inquisitor" scene, but fails to mention the incompatibility of the Christ figure in that scene with the Jesus of the Gospels. It is very unlikely that the Christ of the Gospels would have quietly listened to such a terrible person as the Grand Inquisitor, smiled demurely, given him a little kiss, then gone his merry way without so much as a single verbal challenge. When confronted with hypocritical and self-righteous religious leaders, the Christ of the Gospels "got in their faces" and "told them off"—sometimes with strong (albeit perfectly just) insults, at least once with physical violence. The same breach is evinced in the characterization of Prince Myshkin in *The Idiot*. To use the common parlance, Dostoevsky's Christ figures are, frankly, wimps. They lend credence to Nietzsche's understanding of Christianity as a religion for weaklings.

L. A. Carstens
Castaic, California

Rodney Delasanta offers a fine analysis of the work of Fyodor Dostoevsky, who is indeed, as Delasanta says, "a great writer and a good man." In fact, I am quite grateful to him for the depth to which he exposes a remarkable novelist's prejudices and yet demonstrates the aesthetic quality of a public thinker who "understood Christianity *de profundis* and was able to transmit that understanding with an unmatched power."

Nevertheless, Professor Delasanta seems to be held captive by what Paul Ricoeur calls the first level of naiveté. Prof. Delasanta says that "as a Catholic reader" he can revere Dostoevsky. But he then goes on to say: "So, I mutter to myself, especially in consequence of his Russian Orthodox spirituality, should he not have tolerated my Catholicism, or at least muted his disrespect for it? East is East and West is West, but to my unsophisticated American eye the spiritual respect of the West for the East has gone cruelly unrequited."

It seems to me that a tyranny of the "shoulds" seizes Prof. Delasanta's evaluation of history. If we live by the "shoulds" of life, then no progress will be made in ecumenical dialogue. Divided by centuries of hatred and conflict, the Church needs time to heal. We need to understand why Patriarch Alexei II is unwilling to seek what unites rather than what divides the Church. Or perhaps we have to accept that the Russian Patriarch is not at the same place as his Western counterparts in terms of spiritual and ecclesial respect.

Here in the West many consider ecumenism to be a way of life; not so in other parts of the world. Dialogue on whatever level is the result of God's grace and the generosity of human relationships. It would be nice if the two Patriarchs could sing the *Te Deum* or a *Moleben* before too long, but significant issues and long-standing perceptions need to be recognized and dealt with honestly.

In that context I am reminded of a shrewd observation by the late Rus-

sian Orthodox priest, Father Alexander Schmemmann: "Lately Catholicism is trying to follow suit [in aping the Protestants] with a dull social message and service to the world." Prof. Delasanta seems to agree with Dostoevsky's diagnosis of the ills of the West. But if the Eastern Churches see the Roman Church accommodating itself to those very pathologies, then Eastern wariness toward Rome no longer seems reactionary, just cautious and prudent.

Paul A. Zalonski, S.J.
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Rodney Delasanta replies:

I infer from Kevin Martin's questions about papal power that he thinks that Dostoevsky would have balked at John Paul's anti-Communist mission, even though Russian Orthodoxy was among its major beneficiaries, because papal *realpolitik* is un-Christian and should never be enlisted even in the cause of Christ's Kingdom, which is not of this world. I would hope that the obvious distinction that leaps to my mind—the difference between spiritual power enlisted against "evil empires" and spiritual power dedicated to its own temporal gain—would have occurred to Dostoevsky too. It's obvious that John Paul, like Pope Leo before him, faced a different kind of enemy and armed himself with a different kind of breastplate than, say, the warrior pope Julius II, who really was a temporal lord. To Stalin's question—"How many divisions has the pope?"—John Paul would have to answer, "None since the *Risorgimento*," and this is one reason why he is no longer a temporal lord.

Still, it would be interesting to know what Dostoevsky thought of papal militancy against rapacious empires in earlier times, like Pius V against the Turks at the naval battle of Lepanto and Pius VII against Napoleon, especially since both struggles were against enemies of Russia. Would Pius V have earned Dostoevsky's approval by remaining above the fray and watching the

Mediterranean fall under Turkish/Muslim control? And should Pius VII have only preached the gospel from the sidelines without politically opposing the Corsican juggernaut across Europe to Moscow itself? It is hard to imagine Dostoevsky or Orthodox churchmen answering "yes" to these questions, but for them the depth of anti-papal feeling might even have trumped self-interest.

With respect to L. A. Carstens' reading of the "wimpy" figures of Christ in Dostoevsky, allow me at least to respond to the Christ of the Grand Inquisitor. (Prince Myshkin would require another essay.) It is imperative to recall that the Christ of the Grand Inquisitor is the creation of Ivan Karamazov, who wrote the prose poem in order to counter Alyosha's insistence that, before we give up on God in His apparent indifference to human suffering, especially the suffering of children, we must take Christ's own suffering into account. In his self-serving narrative, the Enlightened Ivan sees Christ as failed, defeated, banished—*écrasé*, if I may use Voltaire's famous word—from the world of Christians, at least Christians in the West. True, Ivan's Christ has offered the world freedom, which the world has forsaken for bread, but what Ivan leaves out of his "respondeo" to his brother is that Christ by his crucifixion has also offered the world the divine exemplar of suffering, the one interpretation of the mystery of human suffering that can stand up to Ivan's withering attack. The working out of that redemptive suffering sets the direction for the rest of the novel, especially as it is dramatized in the Russian Monk chapter of the life of Father Zosima and then in the ministry of his disciple Alyosha. Both of them are Christ figures—Russian Christ figures, to be sure—who in Dostoevsky's world are hardly "wimps" and are spiritually responsible to "all for all."

In response to Fr. Zalonski, I admit that I am probably guilty of more levels of naiveté than Paul Ricoeur can

count. If I am a captive to the historical “should,” I confess that my captivity is voluntary, because I cannot conceive of justice or peace ever being kindled into reality without the spark of a human “should.” Professional theologian or historian I am not, but only a reasonably informed Christian who looks at the wound of the Schism and wonders why churchmen routinely expect it to take more than a thousand years to heal. No hatred was more intense than that between the Germans and French after 1870, and yet “grace broke through gravity” (in Simone Weil’s memorable phrase) when Konrad Adenauer and Charles DeGaulle knelt together in the Cologne Cathedral to signal a healing between their two countries. One of them must have uttered the first “should.” And when Anwar Sadat forced a reluctant Menachim Begin to shake hands on an unlikely peace between Egypt and Israel, that “should” actually cost him his life.

With his own sense of “should,” John Paul has moved mountains to help rescue Orthodoxy from the oppression of international atheism while seeking forgiveness for those sins that Catholics have committed against the Orthodox. And for this all he asks is that Alexei II heat up the samovar and invite him to tea. Is it not ironic that the same John Paul who kissed the Wailing Wall when invited to Jerusalem is forbidden by a brother patriarch to kiss the sacred walls of the old Kremlin?

Not-So-Hard Thoughts?

It is good to think “Hard Thoughts in Wartime” (January), but I’m not sure James Nuechterlein is doing so. While he doesn’t claim victory at this date, Mr. Nuechterlein cheers on the early war efforts and denigrates the anti-war critics for speaking of a “quagmire”—though they might respond that a quagmire may be just a damp spot on the sand in the beginning.

However, it is a welcome relief that Mr. Nuechterlein pauses to visit the

“tradition of pacifist thought” that may “not be as feckless” as most think. Here, at least, he recognizes the deeply religious nature of martyrdom as the driving force for the other side.

To argue that radical Islam will, no matter what, “produce new generations of martyrs” is no justification for reciprocal lethal violence by anyone, especially by Christian believers. Upon citing the old Vietnam mantra to “capture their hearts and minds,” Mr. Nuechterlein may just brush by the neighborhood of “hard thoughts.” Is it not the claim of our Lord that his radical new birth brings about just such change? Are not the “root causes” of the attacks by radical Islam and our lethal response found in the “deceitful and desperately wicked” heart we all share?

Might not the empirical question of deterrence then be answered less by massive force than by the gospel? Ah, but maybe that is the not-so-fine line between nationalistic thinking and biblical thinking. The latter is hard, the former soft.

It is easy to defend “doing what one must” and “saying one’s prayers” because “one” is the only authority consulted. It is harder to live in obedience to commands to “love our enemies and pray for those who spitefully use” us. Is the issue then that believers are called to a higher standard than unbelievers and the governments of the world? Is the biblical imperative for believers to be “in the world” but not “of the world” more to the point than the pseudo-difficulty of contemplating the “morally problematic”? I would posit that not even war “pushes us to and sometimes beyond our moral capacities”; we choose to sin freely. Happily, our Lord is “faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” if we confess them. This is probably a better format for our prayers, but undoubtedly harder than our nationalistic egos would wish.

William T. Hunter, Jr.

Santo Domingo,
Dominican Republic

Although James Nuechterlein acknowledges “the limits imposed by the rules of just war,” he avoids discussing how these limits bear on the way the U.S. military intervention in Afghanistan has been conducted. Instead, he pleads that war is “a limit situation” that sometimes pushes us “beyond our moral capacities.” When we are so pushed, “We can only do what we must, and say our prayers.”

With the Italian theologian Antonio Rosmini, I maintain the contrary. We cannot grant ourselves a status that is somehow beyond our moral capacities. Whatever the situation, we can perform no action unless we are certain (i.e., “morally certain”) that “the action we are about to do is not intrinsically evil. Otherwise, we expose ourselves to the danger of formal evil” (Rosmini, *Conscience* [1844], 1989).

Are we morally certain that the massive bombing of practically defenseless soldiers is not a violation of the “naked soldier” rule? No? Then we cannot resort to such bombing. Likewise: Are we morally certain that “collateral” civilian deaths will not be disproportionate to carefully identified military objectives? No? Then we must circumscribe attacks so as not to violate the principle of proportionality.

Moral limitations on the conduct of war, Mr. Nuechterlein writes, “must always be kept in mind by our leaders.” The just war tradition, however, is comprehensive in its interest in getting beyond the minds of leaders to criticize the structured situation in which these leaders find themselves. The *Postulata* presented to the First Vatican Council in 1870 is an early description of this badly structured situation: “The present condition of the world has assuredly become intolerable on account of huge standing armies. The nations groan under the burden of the expense of maintaining them. The spirit of irreligion and forgetfulness of law in international affairs open an altogether readier way for the beginning of illegal and

unjust wars, or rather hideous massacres spreading far and wide." What this *Postulata* implicitly protests is the fact that, by force of distorted circumstances, we are too often left to apply our just war criteria only after the fact.

John F. Maguire
Natural Law Jurisprudence Center
Berkeley, California

Knowledge, Wisdom, and Cardinal Newman

I have been teaching John Henry Cardinal Newman's *Idea of a University* to undergraduates and graduate students for over thirty years, and I must say that the argument of this rich and complex work seems to me to be distorted beyond recognition in Edward Tingley's "Knowledge for the Sake of Knowledge" (January). I would fail a student who ascribed to Newman the things Mr. Tingley ascribes to him.

According to Mr. Tingley, Newman is the unwitting prophet of "a post-Enlightenment world closed to wisdom." Newman's "knowledge" is a substitute for wisdom; it is knowledge of facts devoid of values, of facts that remain uninterpreted, unstructured by meaning, detached from the "big picture," degraded to an "informational commodity." Mr. Tingley thinks that all of this is implied in Newman's teaching that liberal knowledge is to be sought "for its own sake," which he thinks excludes the possibility of liberal knowledge being sought for the sake of wisdom. All this seems to me to make Newman say the very opposite of what he really says.

Newman used the following analogy to explain his conception of liberal knowledge. Imagine a person born blind awakening from the surgery that restored his sight. He would not at first perceive the ordered world that you and I know, but would only have, Newman supposes, a jumble of sensations, "nothing else but lines and colors, without mutual connection, dependence, or con-

trast, without order or principle, without drift or meaning." Only gradually would he learn to pick out distinct beings, to discern where one being stops and another one starts, to tell which being is closer and which is farther away, how they act on each other, and what belongs in their background.

Now we live not only in a visual but also in an intellectual world, and Newman thinks that in this intellectual world we are at first in a confused condition like that of the person just receiving his vision. We conflate things that are really very different; we do not discern what is more important and less important. Newman thinks that to become liberally educated is to learn to order things in the intellectual world, to rank them, to understand their interrelations, their ultimate unity, so that a kind of cosmos emerges in the realm of the spirit analogous to the ordered world of perception in the realm of the senses. Thus those who merely accumulate information do not count as liberally educated for Newman. To be really educated you have to know how "to invest facts with an idea" and to locate them within the whole of knowledge. This is what Newman teaches from the beginning to the end of *The Idea of a University*.

Is this ideal of liberal knowledge not also an ideal of wisdom? Does Newman not entertain a vision of wisdom when he says, "But the intellect . . . which has learned to leaven the dense mass of facts and events with the elastic force of reason, such an intellect cannot be partial, cannot be exclusive, cannot be impetuous, cannot be at a loss, cannot but be patiently collected, and majestically calm, because it discerns the ends in every beginning, the origin in every end, the law in every interruption, the limit in each delay"? Newman is the very last person who can be charged with basing education on uninterpreted facts to the neglect of comprehensive principles of meaning.

Mr. Tingley entirely misunderstands Newman's talk about cultivating knowledge "for its own sake." Newman does not mean by this that you have to cultivate some piece of knowledge in isolation from the whole of knowledge, as if you would cultivate it for the sake of something else by inserting it in the whole of knowledge. No, he means just the opposite of this; what is good for its own sake is precisely the habit of mind that "never views any part of the extended subject matter of Knowledge without recollecting that it is but a part" and that "makes everything in some sort lead to everything else" and "would communicate the image of the whole to every separate portion." It is this wisdom in the liberally educated mind that is worth having for its own sake. In a word: with his "knowledge for its own sake" Newman does not exclude the relation to the whole of knowledge, but insists on it as the main point.

Mr. Tingley seems to misunderstand Newman in yet another fundamental way when he aligns him with the German Enlightenment. Mr. Tingley thinks that Newman is affected by rationalist ideals of self-evidence according to which many moral and religious truths are easily demonstrable to every rational being. In fact Newman was a relentless critic of such ideals; he is always showing up the limits of formal proof and always pleading the case of intuition, reasons of the heart, and ways of reasoning that cannot fully be put into words. Ian Ker, the great authority on Newman, observes that the originality of Newman's ideas on faith and reason "lay above all in their rejection of the received Enlightenment concept of reason."

Mr. Tingley tries to play off Newman's *Idea of a University* against John Paul II's *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. He quotes these words of the Pope: "Scholars will be engaged in a constant effort to determine the relative place and meaning of each of the various disciplines within the context of a vision

of the human person and the world that is enlightened by the gospel.” Mr. Tingley thinks that this is the wisdom about education that Newman betrayed. He seems to have overlooked the fact that in exactly this paragraph of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* John Paul quotes Newman as agreeing with him! John Paul says there, “Cardinal Newman observes that a University ‘professes to assign to each study which it receives its proper place and its just boundaries; to define the rights, to establish the mutual relations, and to effect the intercommunion of one and all.’” Mr. Tingley evidently has a talent for getting things exactly backwards; he assures us that the Pope contradicts Newman, and his proof is a passage where the Pope makes it clear that he agrees with Newman. Mr. Tingley seems to have read *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* with no more care than he read *The Idea of a University*.

John F. Crosby
Professor of Philosophy
Franciscan University
Steubenville, Ohio

Edward Tingley replies:

Professor Crosby’s letter took me by surprise, apparently unrelated to the article I thought I had written yet provoked by it. The task it sets me is not to defend my claims (as, oddly, no claim I made was attacked) but to clear up serious confusion—caused, I sense, by two things.

First, by the fact that the terms *knowledge* and *wisdom* have specific senses in my remarks, and filling in other senses makes those remarks—I fully agree—breathhtakingly senseless.

By “knowledge” Prof. Crosby has taken me to mean “uninterpreted facts” and the results of hard proof. Why, I don’t know. Unless he presumed I could not mean what we normally take liberal arts knowledge to mean, given that I attribute deficiencies to it. But that is what I do mean. I mean the same thing by knowledge that Prof. Crosby means. That Newman means.

Newman saw knowledge as we do: not as “self-evidence” or proven fact but in contrast to “opinion”—what can be supported with widely visible evidence and widely effective arguments.

Prof. Crosby seems to understand “wisdom,” on the other hand, as interpreting facts, clothing them with meaning and investing them with values, learning to rank things, grasping relations. And this is pretty much a description of knowledge, for these are things that a botanist or an historian does. He seems to suggest that Newman’s world is not closed to wisdom because it is open to this kind of sense-making.

But this view of wisdom could not possibly fit what I wrote, for if wisdom had the same description as knowledge what purpose could I have in saying that knowledge has usurped the place of wisdom?

And it gradually dawns on me that the very state I was attempting to characterize—that the concept of “wisdom” has been diluted in the modern period until it is indistinguishable from knowledge (Prof. Crosby’s letter giving evidence of this)—can affect the way a reader encounters these terms. The condition described bedevils the description.

My point was that, regardless of Newman’s express desire to integrate knowledge into some whole, the restriction of education to publicly supportable claims means that Newman’s university broke from its tradition. Whether “the imparting of knowledge” is in fact the teaching of wisdom depends entirely upon what you understand knowledge to be.

Newman wished that knowledge would tend to a higher unity, and in so doing gave John Paul II every reason to see him as an ally: “[Newman] proposed that learning should not lack unity, but be rooted in a total view.” Newman talks of “converging . . . to the true center,” which he names as theology, but (to repeat) Newman created no branch

of the university to form that whole. (It is not the task of theology. It is not the task of *any* discipline, each devoted to the imparting of knowledge.) So where, in the university, is this wisdom?

And this brings me to the second cause for confusion. It was probably unwise to agree to publish my remarks on Newman separately, outside the larger argument that initially housed them. If you are told, abruptly, “We must leave this boat,” you will probably resist if you see nothing but water in every direction. The boat will seem very good. Criticisms of it will perhaps infuriate you. And I could not agree more that Newman is a vessel, whereas most university education is just long years of treading water.

So the thrust of my remarks was lost by focusing upon Newman rather than on the positive point, which envisions a *Christian* university open to a deeper sense of wisdom than Newman’s.

To what end did Newman separate out “Christian knowledge”? Knowledge that has its “end in itself,” he writes, is not knowledge as a service to “virtue or religion.” Why was the university designed to make the “gentleman” and not (as the Pope proposed) to help students “live their Christian vocation”? Any proper answer to that question situates Newman in history, revealing the Humean, post-Enlightenment division between fact and value, knowledge and morals that defines the modern landscape. Convinced of faith, Newman was certainly an Enlightenment foe, but he could not entirely escape his world.

And why *does* Christian education accept that division? Why is there no room for a “knowledge oriented to wisdom” as the liberal learning tradition understood it? Augustine conceives knowledge in relation to wisdom, the know-how to fulfill our only task: the journey to God.

The Pope, by contrast, suggests a truly Enlightenment-free view of

knowledge when he says that the scholar's task is to integrate the disciplines "within the context of a vision of the human person and the world that is enlightened by the gospel." In this paragraph he advocates "a higher synthesis of knowledge" in that specific context (citing Newman only in respect of "mutual relations" the disciplines must have).

In *Fides et Ratio*, John Paul II characterizes "history" as "the arena where we see what God does for humanity. God comes to us in . . . things of our everyday life, apart from which we cannot understand

ourselves." Would it not, therefore, be an historian's task (much as it may shock Humean sensibilities) to present history in such terms? In biblical times to know about history was to interpret human events in relation to our purpose: to see the building of the Tower as idolatry was to understand an historical event.

Would it not be knowledge of art to understand a nineteenth-century landscape painting (as Ruskin did) as a challenge? ("As I myself look at it, there is no fault or folly of my life . . . that does not rise up against me.")

But modernity separates knowing into a factual armature to which the individual must attach, as if this were all perfectly easy, moral significance. The task of figuring out how the world pictured in knowledge relates to his vocation is foisted upon the student as a mere individual.

To know is to grasp reality in the sense of what will heed and what will hinder me on the journey that is the whole meaning of my life. And if I have to do that on my own, then I am not being *taught* wisdom. The wisdom is not in the university. The university is closed to wisdom.

The Slender Girl

The morning slipping past the white
Of curtains is a girl, slender
As April in a wistful light,
With naive air, unsure, tender,
Offering herself like daffodils
To cruelty from belated snow.
A sudden bird quells doubt with trills
Of wellspring love. Our girl will grow.

Robert Greer Cohn

THIS TIME

Let Us Pray

James Nuechterlein

Regular readers will recall that I have, from time to time, had occasion to remark on the inglorious state of American Lutheranism. Most of those remarks have been pointed in the direction of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the largest U.S. Lutheran body at 5.1 million members. But in the interests of fair play and equal opportunity kvetching, it is time to shift attention to the smaller (2.6 million) and more conservative Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS). If the ELCA seems incapable of stopping its drift into the dreary liberal Protestant mainstream, the LCMS appears determined to maintain the sectarian mentality that, in contradiction to its theological self-understanding, has marked it from its origins in 1847.

The immediate point at issue is prayer: not whether to pray, but with whom. In the wake of September 11, Mayor Rudy Giuliani's office organized a memorial service for the victims of the World Trade Center tragedy. The invited participants in the September 23 event at Yankee Stadium were an eclectic lot—politicians, show-biz types, and religious leaders of every conceivable variety. Among the latter was the Rev. David Benke, pastor of an LCMS congregation in Brooklyn and president of the synod's Atlantic District. When it came his turn in the politico-religious exercises—the Associated Press nicely summarized the occasion as “a flag-draped gathering of prayer”—he offered a brief, explicitly Christian petition and sat down.

To those who know Missouri, what followed was as predictable as night succeeding day. A number of LCMS clergy filed charges with Synod President Gerald Kieschnick complaining that in offering prayers along with assorted Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Buddhist clergy, Benke was guilty of (the terms varied) unionism, universalism, syncretism, and even idolatry. When it became known that Kieschnick had approved Benke's participation in advance, the critics filed charges against him as well. The synod's Commission on Constitutional Matters ruled that only the church's national convention, which will next meet in 2004, can exercise discipline against the synod president, but that did not let Pastor Benke off the hook. The charges against him are still pending, and one of the synod's vice presidents is charged with recommending what, if

any, action should be taken against him. The possibilities include an official reprimand, dismissal from synod office, or even—though this, most knowledgeable observers think, would be extremely unlikely—removal from the pastoral ministry.

All this has been highly embarrassing for Missouri (so embarrassing, in fact, that church officials have placed a gag order on discussion of the matter by parties to the case or even by church publications). Most Americans aware of the issue, including most American Christians, find the charges against Benke silly or worse. There is also evidence that a considerable majority of Missouri Lutherans, theologically conservative as they are, recognize and make allowance for the extraordinary circumstances in which Benke acted. Judging from the preliminary public response among clergy and laity alike, most Missourians agree with what he did, and even those uncertain on the matter are willing to give him a pass. They see the good sense—practically and theologically—in what Benke said in defense of his actions: “In a pastoral way it was an appropriate thing to offer a prayer in the name of Jesus at a time of national crisis.”

Defenders of Benke note as well a recent church statement that, while leery of civic prayer services in general, permits clergy participation under extraordinary circumstances (“a once-in-a-lifetime event”) and as long as the pastor is permitted to pray in the name of Jesus. At Yankee Stadium, Benke prayed in Jesus' name, and the event the service memorialized surely fit—or so we must devoutly hope—the “once-in-a-lifetime” prescription. “Let charity prevail” said President Kieschnick of judgments concerning Pastor Benke's behavior, and it seems that most Missouri Lutherans, even those for whom charity in these matters does not ordinarily come easy, are inclined to agree.

All this is not to say that the occasion was unproblematic. I watched much of it on television, and my reaction was decidedly ambivalent. Parts of the civic event/prayer service were genuinely moving, parts of it descended deeply into kitsch. Politicians bloviated, Bette Midler sang loud, and Oprah Winfrey, who acted as emcee, oprahfied the entire proceedings. Civil religion in practice is often not a pretty thing to behold. But bad aesthetics is not necessarily bad piety, and my overall response to the occasion was that I was glad it had occurred, that it was, all in all, appropriate, and that David Benke had rightly participated in it.

Critics of Benke within the LCMS are not entirely without support from outside voices. The columnist Rod Dreher, writing in *National Review Online* (February

21, 2002), does not explicitly put himself in the anti-Benke camp, but he does say that Benke's critics "are asking the right questions, particularly at a time when syncretism . . . is a grave threat to religious identity and moral reasoning." His argument comes down to this: in a culture awash in moral and theological relativism, post-September 11 ecumenical events like the one at Yankee Stadium have a tendency to blur authentic differences and contribute to our postmodern muddle.

Perhaps so, but one could as easily reverse the argument. True, no one at the event saw it as an occasion to spell out the profound theological differences among the participants. But whatever their *religious* differences, those gathered to mourn the dead were in clear *moral* agreement: no one suggested anything other than that the wanton killing of the innocent civilians in the Trade Towers was a great evil for which there was no legitimate excuse. Those present were saying, in effect, "Whatever our theological differences—and no one here denies that they exist—we know evil when we see it and we can together name it." What happened at Yankee Stadium was not, except for those who chose to so interpret it, an instance of syncretism, and it was certainly not a postmodern denial of clear moral reasoning.

As for the effects of the incident within Missouri itself, there may even be a happy ending for those eager to draw the synod out of itself and into a critical engagement with the larger Church and with American culture. The ultraconservatives in the LCMS seem to have overreached themselves, and the net result could be an advance in the cause of Missouri's beleaguered moderates. It may even be the case that a Missouri unburdened of a blinkered preoccupation with unionism will present itself as an attractive option for those in the ELCA dismayed by that body's continuing flirtation with apostasy.

But perhaps my inveterate optimism—or at least hopefulness—betrays me. The hard-liners in the LCMS are so securely entrenched in power that they may be able to push through some form of censure of Benke for his mild ecumenical gesture. And even if they fail in that endeavor, there is no guarantee that, in the larger scheme of things, anything significant in the synod will have changed.

Flannery O'Connor famously remarked that Catholics are more often made to suffer from the Church than for the Church. Missourians of other than the strictest observance know exactly what she meant. FT

Hic Iacet

Beneath the snow lie fallen leaves,
dead grass below, then graves.
Our lives begin as green as spring
but we must learn what winters bring.
All life's layers lie upon
one another and this stone.

Ralph McInerny

Opinion

Huxley's Hucksters

Mark Gauvreau Judge

The Guggenheim museum recently announced the finalists for the Hugo Boss prize, which is worth \$50,000 and given every two years to an artist whose work “represents a significant development in contemporary art.” The finalists represent contemporary art, all right, and not only in the sense that their works are mostly silly. As Aldous Huxley knew, they are also works of artistic cowardice.

Here are a few of the Guggenheim finalists, as described by the *New York Times*: Francis Alÿs, “who deals with the absurdity of urban life through his collaborations with local artists and craftsmen in a variety of media, from video to performance art”; Anri Sala, who has already won a prize at the 2001 Venice Biennial “for his poetic video installation on transience and tourism”; and Koo Jeong-a—my favorite—“whose pieces incorporate everyday materials like aspirin tablets, pencils, and coins.”

Yes, these are slow-moving targets, good for a few laughs. Yet what's noteworthy is not only why, but also the way many people laugh at this stuff. Usually those outside the modern art world deride works on pencils and tourism, but in a way that is a bit self-deprecating. We know we're out of it, that this stuff is just too sharp and esoteric for our minds to grasp. We waffle and ask ourselves, Is it art? And if so—if, indeed, it comes with the imprimatur of the Guggenheim and \$50,000—aren't we more than a little bit square?

No, actually, we're not, but sometimes it takes someone fearless and eloquent to spell out exactly why. Recently the complete essays of Aldous Huxley were reissued in six volumes. In volume three can be found an essay titled “Art and the Obvious.” First published in 1931, it helps us to make sense of the *Times* article and the attitude that underlies it.

“All great truths are obvious truths,” Huxley begins. “But not all obvious truths are great truths.” He then lists some of the great truths that are also obvious—or at least that were obvious before the era of victimology and the rise of the helping professions: happiness

depends upon oneself “and not external circumstances”; parents love their children and “men and women are attracted one to another in a variety of ways”; many people are moved by nature “to feel elation, awe, tenderness, gaiety, melancholy”; most people are attached to their homes and countries, “to the beliefs which they were taught in childhood and the moral code of their tribe.” All of these are “obvious truths and great truths because they are universally significant, because they refer to fundamental characteristics of human nature.” Thus people never tire of hearing about them. They appreciate validation of the facts of human life, and great artists give it to them. It's why we never tire of love songs.

Huxley then touches on the obvious truths that are not great truths—the fact, for example, that New York has traffic and that fashions change. In light of the Hugo Boss awards, we might add to this list of obvious truths the fact that people find use for aspirin tablets, pencils, and coins. These things may be appreciated by people when they see them in art, noted Huxley, but they don't fulfill the public's need for art that focuses on obvious truths that are also great.

This doesn't mean, of course, that all art about great obvious truths is automatically great art. Sometimes the public will shun great truths because they are often treated in a sentimental and hamfisted way by popular culture—in, say, dopey songs about human weakness or cloying romantic movies that fail to reveal the true beauty of love. Such works aim for the big truths but fail. And in failing, thought Huxley, they often convince our artists that the truths in them are not worth examining: “The excesses of popular art have filled [our artists] with a terror of the obvious—even of the obvious sublimities and beauties and marvels.” They then become “compelled by their disgust and fear” to address only “a tiny fraction of existence.” Like aspirin and pencils, for instance.

Yet as the last few decades have taught us, artists don't always retreat into the quotidian because of popular schmalz. Sometimes they do so because they convince themselves that the big issues are unworthy of examination since great truths do not exist. Huxley's essay is more than seventy years old, so one can only guess at the despair that our art scene would inspire in him today. He was spared Andy Warhol and Robert Mapplethorpe. For the last forty years our media, educational institutions, and those calling themselves artists have dragged the American people along by the nose, trying to convince us that the world we once knew—the world of tradition and faith—is an ossified relic, precious only to the

stupid and reactionary, and thus unworthy of artistic interpretation. We are in, to invoke an apt phrase, a brave new world.

In other ways, however, our current situation might have seemed depressingly familiar to Huxley. After all, he came from a post-World War I generation that, like so many of us today, tended to deny the existence of obvious facts that are great truths. As far as Huxley was concerned, "Those who proclaim that human nature has changed since August 4, 1914 are merely rationalizing their terrors and disgusts."

We, too, have spent years denying the existence of great and obvious truths. Isn't it long past time to say, with Huxley, that shrinking in terror and disgust from the obvious is the act of a coward? How else to describe an artist who traffics in pencils and coins when our world, both before and after September 11, offers such an abundance of subjects for art? How else to explain the cheap anti-Christian pranks of our "artists" when real life provides us with a photograph of the lifeless body of a priest who died giving the last rites as the World Trade Center crumbled around him? The world is full of images and acts of breathtaking beauty—and our artists give us ashtrays and aspirin.

It is in refusing the retreat into the banal that Huxley really hits his stride, denouncing it with an intensity that would be much too bold for most contemporary newspapers. The last paragraph of his essay deserves to be quoted almost in its entirety:

Almost all that is most daring in contemporary art is thus seen to be the fruit of terror—the terror, in an age of unprecedented vulgarity, of the obvious. The spectacle of so much fear-inspired boldness is one which I find rather depressing. If young artists really desire to offer proof of their courage they should attack the monster of obviousness and try to conquer it, try to reduce it to a state of artistic domestication, not timorously run away from it. For the great obvious truths are there—facts. . . . And since they exist, they should be faced, fought with, and reduced to artistic order. By pretending that certain things are not there, which in fact are there, much of the most accomplished modern art is condemning itself to incompleteness, to sterility, to premature decrepitude, and death.

That, and \$50,000.

MARK GAUVREAU JUDGE is the author of *If It Ain't Got That Swing: The Rebirth of Grown-Up Culture* (Spence).

Pluralism and the Catholic University

Alan Charles Kors

The decline of Catholic higher education in our country should concern all Americans, regardless of their religious affiliation. (I am not myself a Catholic.) The Catholic tradition, preserved and revitalized by its own institutions, has made and will continue to make truly indispensable contributions to the intellectual and moral vitality of American life.

At the most basic level, Catholic higher education is vital to the meaning of American pluralism, which does not entail homogeneity, but a variety of lived differences. From well before the time of its founding as a nation, America has allowed distinctive voluntary communities to flourish in peace. We have created a unique society, in which we not only learn from each other—either deeply or marginally, substantively or as objects of mutual curiosity—but in which we also learn from the very possibility of that learning. If you had told our forebears, who came here from cultures all over the world, that their heirs would be living and working harmoniously with the sons and daughters of every inhabited continent, they would have found it to be beyond possibility. If you had told them, further, that their heirs would be living and working harmoniously with the sons and daughters of Catholics, Jews, Lutherans, Unitarians, Calvinists, atheists, Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists, they would have thought you quite mad. The irenic pluralism of the American experiment in religious liberty is historically unprecedented, and, where understood, a political and social inspiration.

Two things underlie the beauty and wonder of this variety. First, it is based on a voluntary act. Whatever the effect of family and early educational influence, the reality of voluntary choice is an ineluctable part of the American experience. The Amish may choose to remain in their community or to define themselves in other ways. Jews may choose to remain in the traditions and laws of their fathers, or they may choose to redefine their beliefs and their identities. Catholics may choose to remain in the church and faith that received them, or they may choose to seek their beliefs and obligations elsewhere. We are what we are, in this astonishing land, by personal acts of the will for which we are individually responsible. Your creed, religious identity, and witness

are not dictated by the state or by the absence of other real choices. In America, our pluralism itself makes us conscious, vivid, and truly volitional embodiments of our choices about ultimate things.

The precondition of making such choices, however, is the existence of the means to actualize them. The choice of an orthodox Jewish life, for example, depends upon the existence of higher Jewish education. The choice to be Amish depends upon the existence of a rich Amish cultural life. Likewise, the choice to be Catholic depends upon the existence of the depth and fullness of Catholic higher learning and education.

We have all chosen to live in pluralistic America, with people who have made private choices quite different from our own. This does not mean, however, that we choose to live only in pluralistic communities and institutions within that pluralistic society. Indeed, our society would cease to be genuinely pluralistic if we transformed all institutions and traditions within it into pluralistic ones. Most individuals thus choose to live in somewhat pluralistic neighborhoods, and most, though not all, to work in pluralistic businesses or enterprises. Virtually none among us, however, chooses to attend pluralistic churches and places of worship; in that domain of life, almost everyone wishes to participate in a community of individuals who accept one set of beliefs and liturgies and who reject others. When it comes to universities, some of us see them as more analogous, within limits, to neighborhoods, while others of us see them as more analogous to communities of belief and value. From religious Americans who make the latter choice with regard to universities there arises the rich tapestry of credal higher education.

In terms of the deepest meaning of American pluralism, those who make the latter choices enrich us all because they allow individuals to realize the fullest potentials of their choices. Where would Judaism be without its Talmud Torahs and its Yeshivas? Where would secular humanism be without its Harvard? Where would American Catholicism be without its truly Catholic institutions of higher education?

The preservation and vivification of distinct traditions of belief and value benefit American pluralism immeasurably. This gives us the ability to learn from each other at our most coherent and best informed, which means the ability to discover claims of truth in traditions into which we were not born. American pluralism not only profits incalculably from vital centers of non-pluralistic education, but, indeed, ultimately depends upon them for its cultural vitality.

John Stuart Mill, in *On Liberty*—a work, I fear, too casually dismissed by many Catholic thinkers—observed that if one wished to learn a belief, it was not enough to be taught it by someone who was not an adherent. One

needed to hear a belief in its most forceful, persuasive form—that is, from a believer. If Protestants wish to understand Catholicism, they need to hear more than Protestant exposition of what it is that Catholicism supposedly teaches. They need to hear it articulated and defended by a Catholic mind alive to its faith and belief.

In addition to the benefits that flow from keeping pluralism alive, the philosophical and theological tradition of Catholicism enriches the life of the American mind. In particular, the Catholic tradition embodies the very foundation of the civilization of the West, the meeting of Athens and Jerusalem.

We live in an age of willful blindness and willful forgetfulness. Philistines do not know that virtually every thrust that they make against Christian belief was anticipated and articulated in the *sed contra* objections of the doctors of the Church themselves. They do not know that the debates of which the moderns are so proud ultimately resolve into arguments that arose in past ages among Catholic philosophers and theologians—realism versus nominalism, the limits of natural human knowledge, the tension between philosophical skepticism and rational dogmatism. To cite one example among so many, in seventeenth-century France one found scholasticism of various philosophical stripes, Thomist and Scotist revivals, an Augustinian revival, Cartesian, Aristotelian, and Malebranchist schools of Catholic natural philosophy, a flowering of mysticism as well as debates about the dangers of mysticism. There were deep disputes between Jansenists and Jesuits. Dominicans, Franciscans, and Jesuits debated each other over the nature of non-Christian cultures and the scope and limits of natural law and natural reason. Montaigne, Charron, Mersenne, Gassendi, and the singular Aristotelian Barbey; Pascal, Arnauld, Fenelon; devotees of Suarez, Salamanca, Louvain, the Sorbonne, and Port Royal—all living and flourishing within the bosom of the Catholic Church.

Never, in the history of all creeds, has there been more intellectual dynamism, vitality, philosophical diversity, mutual criticism, and natural philosophical liberty than in the history of the Catholic Church. Every century's or generation's rediscovery of or encounter with Augustine and Aquinas, for example, is productive of profoundly creative thought and debate and forces anew a consideration of the deepest issues known to the human mind. Think of the rediscovery in recent times of the genius of the Catholic University of Salamanca, and of its insights, creativity, and analytic rigor on issues of natural law, economics, and politics. I do not trust the secular universities to cherish this heritage, let alone to keep it alive. If Catholic universities will not sustain in both learned and living form the immeasurable legacy and demonstrable relevance of the Catholic intellectual and theological inheritance, who will? Harvard? The University of Min-

nesota? My own University of Pennsylvania, which could barely be persuaded to preserve the study of religion, theology, and spirituality as an academic discipline?

The students in my courses are excellent, with minds open to thoughtful consideration of everything presented to them. Through no fault of their own, they know nothing about the following: Arius, Athanasius, the Nicene Creed, Patristics, Augustine, Boethius, the contribution of the Irish Church to Western Civilization, the Investiture Controversy, Aquinas, Suarez, or the Catholic Reformation. I have to explain, *de novo*, all of these references. I must explain to them the difference between an apology in the modern sense and apologetics. They have never heard of natural law. They cannot name a single Catholic pope, cardinal, archbishop, or theologian of the seventeenth, eighteenth, or nineteenth centuries. Should one care about Catholic higher education? The question answers itself.

This ignorance is rendered even more disturbing by the manifest and uninformed hostility of the secular academic world to Catholicism. At the curricular level, the truly serious study of Catholicism, let alone the recognition of the intellectual vibrancy and legitimacy of a distinctly Catholic perspective, is virtually limited to underfunded Medieval Studies programs, and even in that domain, their place is slipping fast.

Consider, if you will, the varying career trajectories of scholars at our secular universities who make the following statements about their commitments: I am a Foucauldian; I am a Thomist. I am a deconstructionist; I am an Augustinian. I am a gender feminist; I am a neo-Scholastic. I am a political and cultural radical; I am a Catholic. Colleagues at secular universities say with pride, and are rewarded for, such statements as, "My teaching and scholarship are an extension of my radical politics." Now, imagine the reaction to a professor at the same institutions who said, "My teaching and scholarship are an extension of my Catholic faith."

If one looks at the university in loco parentis, the situation is even bleaker. Speech codes protect feminists from any creation of "a hostile or offensive environment," but gender feminists may say whatever they choose about the Catholic Church, its pontiff, its clergy, and its beliefs. The sign, "Keep Your Rosaries Off Our Ovaries," is a commonplace of pro-choice rallies. Catholic-bashing hate speech is a staple of most so-called Women's Centers. The very universities that ban antifeminist speech in the name of civility and sensitivity to the culture of "others" proclaim Catholic-bashing to be a mark of their devotion to freedom of expression. Catholic students must bear the insults of Serrano's *Piss Christ*, a crucifix immersed in the artist's urine, and Serrano is invited to university after university to exhibit his work and give speeches on art. At Carnegie Mellon Uni-

versity, a Resident Advisor, Patrick Mooney, asked to be excused from wearing a pink triangle during Gay and Lesbian Awareness Week on grounds of his Catholic conscience, while reiterating his contractual obligation not to discriminate in any way against gay and lesbian students. He was fired. There are many such examples of double standards.

The so-called "multicultural" agenda that dominates freshman orientations and residential programming presents itself as inviting the deep study, appreciation, and celebration of all cultures. I can guarantee that this feigned inclusiveness does not extend to Catholic culture. Indeed, multiculturalism has come to mean that the culture of which Catholicism is a part must be diminished and overcome. For many academics, multiculturalism simply means that there is one dominant, hegemonic, wicked culture that prevails in the West; Greek and Christian in its origins, it spreads arbitrary injustice everywhere. Only those voices that speak against and vitiate Western, Christian culture are deemed "multicultural." That is why only Liberation Theology, among the full spectrum of Catholic voices, is "multicultural." That is why the Sandinistas are "multicultural," while the Catholic Cuban entrepreneurs of Dade County are not. It is up to faithful Catholics to break this monopoly on academic moral witness, and to demonstrate, by lived experience and vivid sincerity, the absurdity of the "multiculturalist" claim to have demystified their cultural contribution to humanity.

It is once again time for Catholic universities to serve as monasteries, preserving the deepest things, in the midst of the current barbarian ravages. They are uniquely qualified to preserve the most precious of legacies: the Western intellectual tradition, which is linked to an openness to the human condition wherever it is found. Against social constructionism, this tradition recognizes that there is a reality independent of the human will. Against the crude current academic categories of race, ethnicity, and sexuality, it affirms the moral truth of a common humanity based upon our existence as beings with rational and responsible souls. Perhaps most importantly, in an academic culture that no longer affirms individual freedom, responsibility, accountability, and dignity, Catholic universities must preserve the belief that freedom and dignity have an ontological status that is a precondition of our full humanity. They must bear witness to the belief that freedom is a gift that distinguishes us from the beasts.

ALAN CHARLES KORS is Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania and President of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education. This essay is adapted from his *Cardinal Newman Lecture*, given at the annual meeting of the national Cardinal Newman Society held at Georgetown University.

How I Became the Catholic I Was

Richard John Neuhaus

This is more a story than an argument. It is in some ways a very personal story, and yet not without broader implications. It is just possible that some may discern in the story suggestions of an argument, even an argument about the nature of Lutheranism, and of Protestantism more generally.

When in 1990 I was received by the late John Cardinal O'Connor into full communion with the Catholic Church—on September 8, the Nativity of Our Lady—I issued a short statement in response to the question Why. With Lutheran friends especially in mind, I said, “To those of you with whom I have traveled in the past, know that we travel together still. In the mystery of Christ and his Church nothing is lost, and the broken will be mended. If, as I am persuaded, my communion with Christ’s Church is now the fuller, then it follows that my unity with all who are in Christ is now the stronger. We travel together still.”

When Cardinal Newman was asked at a dinner party why he became a Catholic, he responded that it was not the kind of thing that can be properly explained between soup and the fish course. When asked the same question, and of course one is asked it with great frequency, I usually refer to Newman’s response. But then I add what I call the short answer, which is simply this: I became a Catholic in order to be more fully what I was and who I was as a Lutheran. The story that follows may shed some light on that short answer.

In the statement of September 8, 1990, I also said:

I cannot express adequately my gratitude for all the goodness I have known in the Lutheran communion. There I was baptized, there I learned my prayers, there I was introduced to Scripture and creed, there I was nurtured by Christ on Christ, there I came to know the utterly gratuitous love of God by which we live astonished. For my theological formation, for friendships beyond numbering, for great battles fought, for mutual consolations in defeat, for companionship in ministry—for all this I give thanks. . . . As for my thirty years as a Lutheran pastor, there is nothing in that ministry that I would repudiate, except my many sins and shortcomings. My becoming a priest in the Roman Catholic Church will be the completion and right ordering of what was begun all those years ago. Nothing that is good is rejected, all is fulfilled.

Begin at St. John’s Lutheran Church in the Ottawa Valley of Canada. To be brought up a Lutheran, at least a Missouri Synod Lutheran, at least there and at least then, was to know oneself as an ecclesial Christian. Of course I did not put it that way as a young boy, nor was it put that way to me, but I would later see what had happened. An ecclesial Christian is one who understands with mind and heart, and even feels with his fingertips, that Christ and his Church, head and body, are inseparable. For the ecclesial Christian, the act of faith in Christ and the act of faith in the Church are not two acts of faith but one. In the words of the third century St. Cyprian, martyr bishop of Carthage, “He who would have God as his Father must have the Church as his

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS is *Editor-in-Chief* of *FIRST THINGS*. This article is adapted from a presentation at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana, a seminary of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

mother.” In an important sense, every Christian, even the most individualistic, is an ecclesial Christian, since no one knows the gospel except from the Church. *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*—no salvation outside the Church—applies to all. For some, that truth is incidental; for the ecclesial Christian it is constitutive, it is at the very core, of faith and life.

In my Missouri Synod childhood there were seemingly little things that made a big difference. Some would call them “nontheological factors,” but I see now that they were fraught with theological significance. Across the street from the parsonage of St. John’s was an evangelical Protestant church. Also across the street lived my best friends, the Spooner brothers, who with their devoutly Catholic family attended St. Columkil’s Cathedral. I am sure it was unarticulated but self-evident to me by the time I was five years old that St. John’s and the cathedral had more in common than either had with the evangelical chapel. For one immeasurably momentous thing, our churches baptized babies. Then too, our being saved was something that God did through His Church; it was a given, a gift. It did not depend—as it did for Dougy Cahill, our evangelical friend—upon feelings or spiritual experience. It depended upon grace bestowed through things done.

Unlike the Spooner boys, I was in catechism class taught to speak of *sola gratia*, and was told that the truth in that phrase divided us from the Catholics, but, as best I can remember, I was much more impressed by the *gratia* and disinclined to pick a fight over the *sola*. We both knew that we were to keep the commandments and try to please God in all that we did. The distinction supposedly was that I, as a Lutheran, tried to be good in gratitude for being saved, while Catholics tried to be good in order to be saved. I don’t recall ever discussing this with the Spooner boys, but I expect we would have thought it a distinction without much of a difference. We knew we were baptized children of God for whom Christ died, and that it was a very bad thing to get on God’s wrong side. In catechism class I was told that they, as Catholics, were more afraid of God’s punishment than I, who was sure of forgiveness, but I never noticed that to be the case.

Don’t get me wrong. I was not theologically precocious at age five, or even ten. I was not even especially devout. I really didn’t like having to go to church. But I am looking back now, trying to understand the formation of an ecclesial Christian—a Christian of lower-case catholic sensibilities who would, step by step, be led to upper-case Catholic allegiance. There were other seemingly little things. St. John’s and the other Lutheran churches I knew had a high altar. As did the cathedral. With candles. Also important, there was not

a bare cross but a crucifix. And a communion rail at which we knelt and received what we were taught was really and truly and without any equivocation the Body and Blood of Christ. As were the Spooner boys taught, and as we both said we believed although we agreed that we sure couldn’t figure it out. And we had catechisms to memorize that were almost identical in format and questions, although not always in answers. And everybody knew that the way to tell the difference between Catholic and Lutheran churches and all the others is that Catholics and Lutherans put a cross on top of their steeples instead of a weather vane or nothing at all.

Then too, although in catechism class I heard about *sola scriptura*, we both knew we had a Magisterium, although I’m sure I never heard the term. When it came to settling a question in dispute, they had the pope—and we had the faculty of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. It was perfectly natural to ask the question, “What’s our position on this or that?” The “our” in the question self-evidently referred to the Missouri Synod, and the answer was commonly given by reference to an article in the synod’s official publication, *The Lutheran Witness*, usually written, or so it seemed, by Dr. Theodore Graebner. Why the Spooners went to one church and we to another seemed obvious enough; they were Catholics and we were Lutherans. They were taught that they belonged to the “one true Church” and I was taught that I belonged to the Missouri Synod and all those who are in doctrinal agreement with the Missouri Synod, which community made up “the true visible Church on earth.” So, between their ecclesiological claim and ours, it seemed pretty much a toss-up. They were taught that, despite my not belonging to the one true Church, I could be saved by virtue of “invincible ignorance.” I was taught that, despite their not belonging to the true visible Church on earth, they could be saved by—in the delicious phrase of Francis Pieper, Missouri’s chief dogmatician—“felicitous inconsistency.”

I doubt if ever for a moment the Spooner boys thought that maybe they should be Lutheran. I am sure that I as a boy thought—not very seriously, certainly not obsessively—but I thought about being a Catholic. It seemed that, of all the good things we had, they had more. Catholicism was more. Then too, I knew where all those good things we had came from. They came from the Church that had more. Much later I would hear the schism of the sixteenth century described as, in the fine phrase of Jaroslav Pelikan, a “tragic necessity.” I thought, then and now, that the tragedy was much more believable than the necessity. But in my boyhood, the division did not seem tragic. It was just the way things were. I do not recall anything that could aptly be described as anti-Catholicism. My father’s deer hunting buddy was a Catholic priest, and deer hunting, for my

Dad, was something very close to *communicatio in sacris*. In the Missouri Synod of those days, praying with Catholics—or anyone else with whom we were not in complete doctrinal agreement—was condemned as “unionism.” The rules didn’t say anything about the deep communion of deer hunting.

Of course, we kids went to different schools; they to the “separate” (meaning Catholic) school and we to the “public” (meaning Protestant) school. Sometimes they would walk home on one side of the street and shout, “Catholic, Catholic ring the bell / Protestant, Protestant go to hell.” To which we on the other side of the street reciprocated by reversing the jingle. It was all in good fun, much like a school cheer. I don’t think for a moment that either of us thought it had any reference to the other’s eternal destiny. It is just the way things were. There were other differences. Tommy and Eddie went to confession, and I was curious about that. At St. John’s Lutheran, on Saturday evenings before “communion Sunday,” people came to “announce” for communion, a pale ritual trace of what had once been confession, utterly devoid of any sense of sacramental mystery. It was a simple matter of writing down their names in the “communion book,” and, if my Dad wasn’t there to do it, it was done by my Mother or one of my older siblings.

And there was this: St. Columkil’s had a bishop, put there, it was said, by the pope in Rome. St. John’s had, well, my Dad, put there, as he told the story, by his seminary classmate who got him the call. To be sure it was, in Missouri parlance, a “divine call,” but I wonder now if as a child I intuited that there was, between Bishop Smith and my Dad, some qualitative difference of ecclesial authority. Not that I was inclined to doubt what my Dad taught. After all, he had the Bible, Martin Luther, and the St. Louis faculty on his side. And he was indisputably authoritative in manner. Not for nothing during his days at seminary was he called “Pope Neuhaus.” But this young boy sensed, although he could not say just how, that between the Bishop of Pembroke and the pastor of St. John’s Lutheran Church in Pembroke, there was a qualitative difference of office.

It was not a matter of life-or-death urgency. Live and let live was the order of the day. Where we differed, we were right and they were wrong. In disagreeing with Catholics, everybody on our side—what was vaguely described as the Protestant side—was agreed. But then, we Lutherans disagreed with many Protestants and took the Catholic side when it came to, for instance, baptizing babies and knowing that Jesus is really and truly and without equivocation present in the Holy Communion. It was all very confusing, and didn’t bear too much thinking about. I would in time come to understand that the question is that of authority, and it must be thought about very carefully indeed.

I will return to the question of authority, but for now I simply underscore the ways in which being brought up a Missouri Lutheran—at least then and at least there—produced an ecclesial Christian. One might also speak of a sacramental Christian or an incarnational Christian, but, whatever the terminology, the deepest-down conviction, the most irrepressible sensibility, is that of the touchability, the visibility, the palpability of what we might call “the Christian thing.” To use the language of old eucharistic controversies, *finitum capax infiniti*—the finite is capable of the infinite. Put differently, there is no access to the infinite except through the finite. Or yet again, God’s investment in the finite can be trusted infinitely. Although Lutheran theology discarded the phrase, it is the *ex opere operato* conviction evident in Luther’s ultimate defiance of Satan’s every temptation by playing the trump card, “I am baptized!” *Ex opere operato* is the sacramental enactment of *sola gratia*. It is uncompromisingly objective. By its morbid introspection, the delusions of religious enthusiasm, and the endlessly clever postulations of the theological imagination are called to order by truth that is answerable to no higher truth; for it is Christ, who is the Truth, who speaks in the voice of his Church—“I baptize you . . .,” “I forgive you your sins . . .,” “This is my body . . .”

Moving forward to my teenage years, I had in high school what our evangelical friends would call a born-again experience, and for a time viewed with contempt the ritual and sacramental formalities of what I thought to be a spiritually comatose Lutheranism. For a time, I suppose I might have been a good candidate for the Baptist ministry, but it did not last. Missouri’s traditional hostility toward “pietism”—an exaggerated emphasis on the affective dimension of Christian faith—struck me as hostility toward piety. But after a period of frequently anguished uncertainty about the possibility of sorting out subjective experience and egotistic assertiveness from the workings of grace, I came to a new appreciation of Luther’s warnings against religious enthusiasm. Several years later, at Concordia, St. Louis, I was to discover the possible synthesis of piety, clear reason, and ecclesial authority in the person and teaching of Professor Arthur Carl Piepkorn.

The students most closely gathered around him called him—behind his back, to be sure—“the Pieps,” and those who in American Lutheranism today describe themselves as “evangelical Catholics”—perhaps a fourth or more of the clergy—are aptly called the Piepkornians. Piepkorn was a man of disciplined prayer and profound erudition, and was deeply engaged in the liturgical renewal and the beginnings of Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue. At St. Louis he taught the Lutheran confessional writings of the sixteenth century, which he insistently called “the symbol-

ical books of the Church of the Augsburg Confession.” They were, he insisted, the “symbols” of a distinctive communion within the communion of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. They represented a way of being catholic as the heirs of a Reformation that was intended to be a movement of reform within and for the one Church of Christ.

Piepkorn underscored the Church’s tradition prior to the Reformation, the tradition of which Lutheranism was part. The accent was on continuity, not discontinuity. Perhaps the sixteenth century break was necessary—although that was never emphasized—but certainly the Lutheran Reformation, unlike other movements that claimed the Reformation heritage, had no delusions about being a new beginning, a so-called rediscovery of the gospel, by which the authentic and apostolic Church was reconstituted. Lutheranism was not a new beginning but another chapter in the history of the one Church. The Church is not a theological school of thought, or a society formed by allegiance to theological formulas—not even formulas such as “justification by faith”—but is, rather, the historically specifiable community of ordered discipleship through time, until the end of time. Piepkorn emphasized that we are Christians first, catholic Christians second, and Lutheran Christians third. In this understanding, the goal was to fulfill the promise of the Lutheran Reformation by bringing its gifts into full communion with the Great Tradition that is most fully and rightly ordered through time in the Roman Catholic Church.

In this understanding, the conclusion of the Augsburg Confession of 1530 was taken to be normative. There the signers declare:

Only those things have been recounted which it seemed necessary to say in order that it may be understood that nothing has been received among us, in doctrine or in ceremonies, that is contrary to Scripture or to the church catholic. For it is manifest that we have guarded diligently against the introduction into our churches of any new and ungodly doctrines.

For us Piepkornians, everything was to be held accountable to that claim. In some streams of Lutheran orthodoxy, as well as in Protestant liberalism, a very different notion of normativity was proposed. In the language of the twentieth-century Paul Tillich, catholic substance was to be held in tension with Protestant principle, with Protestant principle having the corrective and final word. But a principle that is not part of the substance inevitably undermines the substance. And what is called the Protestant principle is, as we know

from sad experience, so protean, so subject to variation, that it results either in the vitiation of doctrine itself or further schism in the defense of doctrinal novelty. Theology that is not in service to “the faith once delivered to the saints” (Jude 3) turns against the faith once delivered to the saints. Ideas that are not held accountable to “the Church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of truth” (1 Timothy 3:15) will in time become the enemy of that truth. Such was our understanding of the normative claim of the Augustana to have received nothing contrary to Scripture or to the Catholic Church.

But the Lutheran chapter in the history of the Church did occasion schism, and for that unhappy fact there was blame enough to share all around. In my judgment, the division was tragic but not necessary. There was and is no truth that requires division from the pillar and bulwark of truth. The Catholic Church, as Chesterton observed, is ever so much larger from the inside than from the outside. And especially is that the case, I would add, for those whose identity as Protestants depends upon their being outside. And so it was that for thirty years as a Lutheran pastor, thinker, and writer, as editor of *Una Sancta*, an ecumenical journal of theology, and, later, *Forum Letter*, an independent Lutheran publication, I worked for what I incessantly called “the healing of the breach of the sixteenth century between Rome and the Reformation.” For a long time there seemed to be believable, albeit painfully slow, movement toward that goal. Very hopeful was the reappropriation of the Lutheran tradition associated with the nineteenth-century “evangelical catholic,” Wilhelm Loehe, and the *ressourcement*—the going back to the sources—evident in the 1970s production and reception of the *Lutheran Book of Worship*. Then too, there were promising new levels of understanding and theological reconciliation achieved in the formal Lutheran-Roman Catholic theological dialogues. These hopeful signs, however, were not to last.

The last several decades have not been kind to Lutheranism. By the end of the 1980s it seemed evident to me that real, existent Lutheranism—as distinct from Lutheranism as an idea or school of thought—had, willy-nilly but decisively, turned against the fulfillment of its destiny as a reforming movement within the one Church of Christ. Lutheranism in all its parts, both in this country and elsewhere, had settled for being a permanently separated Protestant denomination; or, as the case may be, several Protestant denominations. Some of my Lutheran friends say that, in entering into full communion with the Catholic Church, I acted precipitously, I jumped the gun. To which I say that I hope they are right; and if, someday in some way that cannot now be foreseen, there is ecclesial reconciliation and a healing

of the breach of the sixteenth century, I hope that my decision will have played at least a minuscule part in that happy outcome.

Mine was a decision mandated by conscience. I have never found it in his writings, but a St. Louis professor who had been his student told me that the great confessional Lutheran theologian Peter Brunner regularly said that a Lutheran who does not daily ask himself why he is not a Roman Catholic cannot know why he is a Lutheran. That impressed me very deeply. I was thirty years a Lutheran pastor, and after thirty years of asking myself why I was not a Roman Catholic I finally ran out of answers that were convincing either to me or to others. And so I discovered not so much that I had made the decision as that the decision was made, and I have never looked back, except to trace the marks of grace, of *sola gratia*, each step of the way.

My reception occasioned some little comment, including the observation that I and others who make this decision have a “felt need for authority.” This is usually said in a condescending manner by people who believe that they are able to live with ambiguities and tensions that some of us cannot handle. Do I have a felt need for authority, for obedience, for submission? But of course. Obedience is the rightly ordered disposition toward truth, and submission is subordination of the self to that by which the self is claimed. Truth commands, and authority has to do with the authorship, the origins, of commanding truth. By what authority? By whose authority? There are no more important questions for the right ordering of our lives and ministries. Otherwise, in our preaching, teaching, and entire ministry we are just making it up as we go along, and, by acting in God’s name, taking His name in vain.

It was sadly amusing to read that a Lutheran denomination in this country is undertaking a major study with a view toward revising its teaching on sexual morality, with particular reference to homosexuality. Especially striking was the assurance that the study would be conducted “without any prior assumptions.” Imagine that. The entire course of Christian fidelity is obedience to the received truth of God’s self-revelation in Jesus Christ, and the Spirit’s guiding of the Church’s reflection on that truth. At some point this Lutheran body will arrive at its new teaching. Through a complicated process of bureaucratic planning, interest group agitation, and a legitimating majority vote, it will eventually arrive at the point of saying “this we believe, teach, and confess.” Undoubtedly Scripture will be cited, but, as Luther said, biblical texts, like wax noses, can be twisted to fit. If, as seems probable, this body adopts a new teaching and one asks by what authority it teaches this new doctrine, the only honest answer will be, “Because we will it to be so.” “It is what was decided by the proce-

dures adopted by our religious society,” they might say. “Ours is, after all, a voluntary association, so nobody else has any right to complain.” By the rules of that denomination, the Church through time and the contemporary Church universal, to which Christ promised the Spirit’s guidance, does not get a vote.

From my boyhood intuitions as an ecclesial Christian, it seemed self-evident that, if God intended to reveal any definite truths for the benefit of humankind, and if Jesus intended a continuing community of discipleship, then some reliable means would be provided for the preservation and transmission of such truths through the centuries. Catholics believe that God did provide such reliable means by giving the apostles and their successors, the bishops, authority to teach in His name and by promising to be with them forever. The teaching of the apostles and of the apostolic churches, securely grounded in the biblical Word of God, continues to this day, and will continue to the end of time. Catholics believe that, under certain carefully prescribed circumstances, the pope and the whole body of bishops are able to teach with infallibility. That is a word that frightens many, but I don’t think it should. It means that the Church is indefectible, that we have God’s promise that He will never allow the Church to definitively defect from the truth, to fall into apostasy. Infallibility, Avery Cardinal Dulles writes, “is simply another way of saying that the Holy Spirit will preserve the Church against using its full authority to require its members to assent to what is false.” Without that assurance, he adds, “the truth of revelation would not be preserved in recognizable form.” And, I would add, to obey the truth we must be able to recognize the truth.

The question of authority, the question of Who says so?, has been with the Church from the beginning. In Corinth some invoked Peter, some Paul, some Apollos, and some Christ. And so it was later with the Montanists, the Arians, the Nestorians, the Valentinians, the Donatists, and on and on. A sure mark of a heretical and schismatic community, said St. Augustine, is that it names itself by a man or an idea rather than by the simple title “Catholic.” Also centuries later, for example in the sixteenth century, those who had sense enough to know that the Church did not begin with their new theological insight tried to reconstruct Christian history to fit their views. Thus the Lutheran Matthias Illyricus Flacius compiled the *Magdeburg Centuries*; thus followers of John Knox claimed to have reestablished the polity of the New Testament Church; thus the “Landmarkist” historiography of American Baptists who trace the lineage of the one true Church through Cathari, Waldensians, Lollards, Albigenses, and all the way back to Jesus himself. All such efforts attempt to answer the question of authority. Some are less ludicrous than others, but none

is plausible. As St. Augustine and all Catholic teachers have known, the teaching of the Church is lived forward, not reconstructed backward.

St. Augustine appealed to the *securus judicat orbis terrarum*—the secure judgment of the whole world, by which he meant the Catholic Church. Yes, but what do you do when that judgment is unclear or in heated dispute? Augustine's answer is that you wait, in firm communion with the Catholic Church and in firm confidence that the Holy Spirit will, as promised, clarify the matter in due course. The point is that apostolic doctrine cannot be maintained over time without apostolic ministry, meaning ministry that is both apostolic in its origins and apostolic in its governing authority. This argument is brilliantly advanced in his polemic against the Donatists, who appealed to St. Cyprian as precedent for refusing to recognize the sacraments of the *traditores*, those who had lapsed in time of persecution. Yes, answered Augustine, the holy Cyprian was confused, and admitted as much; but he awaited clarification by the *securus judicat orbis terrarum*. The one thing he would not do, unlike the Donatists, was to break communion with the Catholic Church.

The Church is holy in practice and correct in doctrine, said the schismatic Donatists, and therefore it cannot exist in communion with the unholy and erring. It follows that the Donatists are the true Church. To which Augustine replied:

If, therefore, by such communion with the wicked the just cannot but perish, the Church had already perished in the time of Cyprian. Whence then sprang the origin of Donatus? Where was he taught, where was he baptized, where was he ordained, since [you claim that] the Church had been already destroyed by the contagion of communion with the wicked? But if the Church still existed, the wicked could do no harm to the good in one communion with them. Wherefore did you separate yourselves?

“Wherefore did you separate yourselves?” Augustine's question echoes down through the centuries, directed at all who have separated themselves from communion with the Catholic Church. Today the criticism is heard that the Catholic Church, for all its magisterial authority, will permit almost anything in teaching or practice so long as one does not formally break communion with the Church. There is truth in that, although I think it not a criticism but a compliment. While what Lutherans call the *publica doctrina*, the public teaching, of the Catholic Church is lucidly clear, it is true that the Church bends every effort, puts the best construction on every deviant opinion, in order to

avoid what Augustine calls “the heinous and damnable sin of schism.” For instance, in the twenty-three years of the supposedly authoritarian pontificate of John Paul II, the number of theologians publicly censured can probably be counted on the fingers of one hand, and the only schism has been that of the integralist Lefebvrists of France. Disagreement, confusion, and false teaching can do great evil, but the remedy for such evil is always to be found in communion with that body that is gifted with the charism of providing *securus judicat orbis terrarum*.

Councils can err, said the Reformers. No, says the Catholic Church, but the Church's teaching lives forward, and no definition, including that of councils, is entirely adequate to the whole of the truth. The Catholic Church has always taught with St. Paul that now, as he says in 1 Corinthians 13, we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now we know in part; then we shall understand fully, even as we have been fully understood. Along the way to that eschatological fullness—which is a frequently jagged, confusing, and conflicted way—it is promised to the Church that she will not, she will not irretrievably, lose the way. It is not everything that we might want, but it is enough; it is more than enough.

The Church's teaching lives forward; it is not reconstructed backward—whether from the fifth century or the sixteenth or the nineteenth or the twenty-first. But through all the changes of living forward, how do we know what is corruption and what is authentic development? Recall Cardinal Newman's reflection on the development of doctrine, a reflection that has been incorporated by magisterial teaching. He suggested seven marks of authentic development: authentic development preserves the Church's apostolic form; it reflects continuity of principles in testing the unknown by the known; it demonstrates the power to assimilate what is true, even in what is posited against it; it follows a logical sequence; it anticipates future developments; it conserves past developments; and, throughout, it claims and demonstrates the vigor of teaching authority. And thus it is, said St. Vincent of Lerins in the fifth century, that in authentic development of doctrine nothing presents itself in the Church's old age that was not latent in her youth. Such was the truth discovered by Augustine, a truth “ever ancient, ever new.”

And so it is that this ecclesial Christian, this son of St. John's Lutheran Church in Pembroke, this former Lutheran pastor of St. John the Evangelist in Brooklyn, was led to September 8, 1990, to be received into full communion by John Cardinal O'Connor in his residence chapel of St. John the Evangelist, my patron saint. In every way, including my awareness of the intercession of St. John, the continuities are ever so much more strik-

ing than the discontinuities. In the words of the Second Vatican Council, my Protestant brothers and sisters are, by virtue of baptism and faith in Christ, truly but imperfectly in communion with the Catholic Church. Which means also, of course, that I am truly but imperfectly in communion with them. Moreover, and according to the same Council, all the saving and sanctifying grace to be found outside the boundaries of the Catholic Church gravitates toward the perfection of that imperfect communion. Some view the Catholic Church as claiming to be self-sufficient, but that is not true. Her ecclesiology is such that, of all Christian communions, she knows herself to be most in need. Nowhere are the words *Ut unum sint*, “that they may all be one,” prayed so fervently; nowhere is the wound of our broken communion felt so keenly; nowhere is the commitment to reconciliation so relentless or irrevocable.

It would take another essay to survey the current prospect for such reconciliation. Suffice it to say that,

whether with respect to the Orthodox Church of the East or the separated communions of the West, these are hard times for ecumenism, hard times for the hope for Christian unity. But the Church has known many times that were harder, much harder; she has learned that the better part of fidelity is sometimes simply persistent waiting upon the movement of the Holy Spirit toward possibilities that she can neither anticipate nor control, but for which we must together pray.

As for now, I end where I began—as in my life’s course I began where I have ended—by saying again: “To those of you with whom I have traveled in the past, know that we travel together still. In the mystery of Christ and his Church nothing is lost, and the broken will be mended. If, as I am persuaded, my communion with Christ’s Church is now the fuller, then it follows that my unity with all who are in Christ is now the stronger. We travel together still.” FT

Nazareth Hall

At school from a pulpit niched
into the wall the Martyrology was read
to boys awaiting lunch, and while they ate
the images of racks and wheels and fire
prepared them for the long digestion
of truths for which they hoped to die.
Waiters brought on trays the heads
of witnesses, among the tables mortal
boys moved toward their later lunch.
All that was half a century since.
How many now lie dead of natural causes,
disease, jammed hearts, or accident,
of anything but Dioclitian cruelty?

Ralph McInerny

Pulpit Economics

William McGurn

In debates between Christian theologians and economists over the nature of capitalism, facts and figures count for almost nothing. At times the two seem to speak separate languages—perhaps most strikingly when they use the very same words.

On the one hand, economists purport to be practical people concerned not with the rightness or wrongness of actions but only with acquiring knowledge of the economic dimensions of those actions. Preachers and theologians, on the other hand, are just the opposite, focusing on those aspects of man that transcend material production; for them, man is possessed of a dignity that can't be measured in per capita income. While it may come as a surprise to many, this difference in emphasis actually has the effect of leading our economists and businessmen to preach a message for the world's poor that is charged with greater hope than what is typically taught by many of our leading theologians and preachers.

Take Asia, for example, and especially the comparative cases of Hong Kong and Manila. Until quite recently Hong Kong was the epitome of colonialism and the embodiment of dog-eat-dog capitalism; yet it was also attractive enough that even its poorest faced the future believing that it would bring greater improvement. And then there is the Philippines, a devoutly Christian nation that is home to some of the friendliest and hardest working people on earth, as well as to some of the cruelest exploitation of the poor by the rich outside the now-defunct Communist bloc.

The contradiction is summed up by the presence of more than 100,000 Filipinas in Hong Kong, many of

them women with university degrees, working as maids to strangers' children as a means of providing for their own back at home. For all the lectures on human rights and democracy coming out of Manila, the brutal fact of Philippine life is that millions of its people are forced to leave their families to do dirty work elsewhere because they have no way to feed their families—this in a strategically located land with an educated, English-speaking workforce and bursting with natural resources. That the only Catholic nation in all of East Asia is synonymous with misery and missed opportunities is troubling, to say the least.

Even those who know nothing else about economics know that its nickname is “the dismal science.” In the years since Thomas Carlyle coined the phrase in 1849, there have been plenty of others who have seen economists as little more than quartermasters in the Army of Mammon, toting up their accounts, oblivious to the human carnage around them. Indeed, badmouthing economists may be one of the truly universal traditions, shared by figures on the left, right, and center. Karl Marx called them “sycophants” of the bourgeoisie. Edmund Burke, father of conservatism, used the word pejoratively in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* when he lamented that “the age of chivalry is gone; that of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded, and the glory of Europe is extinguished forever.” More tartly, George Bernard Shaw is said to have observed that “if you laid economists end to end, you would still never reach a conclusion.” And who can match Edmund Clerihew Bentley's four-line gem:

*John Stuart Mill,
By a mighty effort of will,
Overcame his natural bonhomie
And wrote “Principles of Political Economy.”*

WILLIAM MCGURN is chief editorial writer for the Wall Street Journal. This essay is adapted from an O'Hara Lecture on Business Ethics delivered at the University of Notre Dame.

However amusing we might find such witticisms, I wish to suggest that they are also grossly unfair. Indeed, I would go so far as to argue that, whether economists know it or not, the ideas of wealth and capital that they champion are arguably more spiritual than material. And likewise, whether religious figures know it or not, their tendency to look at the world's poor and see only gloom and doom shows them to be beholden to ideas about wealth and capital that are far more materialistic than spiritual.

At the most basic level, intelligent discussion between economists and religious figures is often hampered by the tendency of each to exclude the other's insights from the conversation. Economists, for example, often overstep the bounds of their discipline to interpret the world exclusively through their own concepts; in doing so, they move from the reasonable proposition that economics constitutes a critical aspect of human nature to the idea that economics *defines* that nature. Similarly, preachers and theologians frequently portray economics as a study of and justification for greed. A much more useful approach is suggested by Pope John Paul II.

According to the Pope, economic freedom is a good, but it is only one of man's freedoms. If we could extract from our religious activists an acknowledgment as limited as this one—that economic freedom is a good—it would do wonders for the poor, especially if they were taught to understand *why* and *how* it is good. Perhaps then they would come to see economic freedom as enhancing possibilities and solidarity rather than taking them away. Moreover, recognizing economic freedom as a good can serve to ground a dynamic view of work—one that sees it as more than animal toil, and even as a process that, at its best, allows all people the opportunity to do and be their best.

In his encyclical on the subject of work, *Laborem Exercens* (1981), John Paul II rightly places it at the heart of the Church's social teaching. Work, he suggests, is "a good thing for man—a good thing for his humanity—because through work man not only transforms nature, adapting it to his own needs, but he also achieves fulfillment as a human being." Work "expresses his dignity and increases it"; it provides him with the wherewithal to have a family, and it links him with his neighbor. An economist would add that in so doing a person also contributes to the wealth of his neighbors.

In short, the Holy Father's understanding of work goes well beyond viewing it as mere exertion. Rather, it involves the essence of man himself. The Pope speaks of this economic activity as labor. We might speak of it just as easily as capital, in the sense that work becomes more human to the degree that man does not simply take the world as given but adds to it, as a co-creator with his

Maker. As the Pope notes in *Centesimus Annus*, "the possession of know-how, technology, and skills" has replaced natural resources as the secret to wealth in the industrialized nations. This is a view of man that sees him primarily as a soul that is capable of improving and adding to God's bounty on earth.

But there is another model of man's relation to the earth—one that can be traced to a figure of considerable relevance because he was both economist and preacher. The influence of the Rev. Thomas Malthus' "Essay on the Principles of Population" continues to be felt more than two centuries after it was written. Prior to Malthus, nations assumed as a matter of course that the greater their populations the richer and better off they would be. Malthus posited something far more disturbing: that a nation's wealth declines as its population increases.

Today, this dubious assumption is accepted as gospel—and not just in religious circles. Indeed, at the United Nations it is practically dogma. In contrast to the Pope's view of man, this one sees him primarily as a mouth to be fed. Naturally the holders of such a view do not incline to cheerfulness. Nor have they learned much from the substantial evidence that Malthus was wrong in his predictions.

Hong Kong is a particularly prominent example. Today it is considered the envy of Asia. But it wasn't way back in the 1950s, when China fell to the Communists and Hong Kong was flooded with hundreds of thousands of desperate refugees. Lacking natural resources and utterly dependent on its unpleasant motherland for water and food, the colony's situation had deteriorated so badly that a local UN official declared that it could only survive through massive Western aid and the resettlement of refugees elsewhere. An American newspaper proclaimed Hong Kong a dying city, and the British grimly entitled the lead chapter in their annual Hong Kong yearbook, "A Problem of People."

In fact, the apocalypse everyone saw just over the horizon never did come to pass. On the contrary, Hong Kong experienced the greatest economic boom in its history. Today it supports a population of about seven million people—more than five times the number the government declared to be Hong Kong's optimum "carrying capacity" back in 1954. Two systems, side by side: one capitalist, one socialist, one supposed to be the system of the bosses and the exploiters, the other invoking the name of the worker. Yet it was the supposedly exploitative market economy that not only made a place for its people at the table but allowed them to prosper. This is what economists mean when they say that the answer to poverty does not lie in trying to slice the existing pie into ever smaller pieces but to bake a bigger pie for all.

Indeed, the most pernicious part of Malthus' work is not its stark prediction of human beings breeding themselves into extinction. It is that it encourages us to see people as liabilities rather than as the assets they are. Human social life comes to resemble a zero-sum game where one person's prosperity comes at another's expense. Viewed in this way, talk about profit does sound obscene. But this is a false logic—one that clouds much of our religiously informed thinking about economic matters today.

Consider the example of Bishop Rembert Weakland, who gave a sadly representative lecture at Georgetown University in 1997 on the tenth anniversary of the U.S. bishops' pastoral letter on economics. In that talk, Bishop Weakland commented on the supposedly widening gap between poor and rich nations, the race to the bottom caused by globalization, and the plight of the poor, whom he claimed are paying the price for everyone else's prosperity. "One aspect is for sure in the globalization process: labor is suffering most."

Bishop Weakland is not alone. One of the more popular metaphors for this standpoint is Spaceship Earth. First heard on campuses in the 1970s, it runs like this. Imagine the planet Earth as a space capsule containing five astronauts. One of them represents the developed world. And though this astronaut accounts for only one-fifth of the capsule's population, he consumes anywhere from two-thirds to nine-tenths of its resources. The proportions reflect the figures given in the United Nations' regular Human Development Report, which shows the richest fifth of humanity having, for example, 90 percent of all Internet accounts, 74 percent of all phone lines, 82 percent of all export markets, and so forth.

Now there are two ways to interpret this information. I suspect that Bishop Weakland would interpret it to say that, in effect, one astronaut is hogging far more than his fair share.

But how might an economist read it? Well, he might begin by asking where all those resources came from. And if he looked for an answer in the same HDR figures, he would discover that the developed world produces 86 percent of the world's resources; in almost all cases, then, the rich astronaut is consuming less than he's made. But an economist would likely go even further: rather than taking existing wealth as a given and coming up with justifications and formulas for redistributing it, he'd probably be more interested in removing impediments that hold the others back.

This difference reminds me of the old story about two shoe salesmen sent to a foreign country only to find out that everyone there walks around barefoot. The first calls up his company's headquarters and says, "Bad news: nobody here wears shoes." The other calls his company and says, "Great news! Nobody here wears

shoes." Traveling through the underdeveloped world, one can't help but notice how optimistic investor classes nearly always are. To invest money in Mexico or China in the 1980s and 1990s—or, for that matter, in Korea or Taiwan in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, or in Vietnam and Nicaragua today—you simply have to be optimistic. But no matter how large the risk or how unpromising the circumstances, there's always someone who sees wealth and value just waiting to be unlocked.

Globalization means many things, but primarily it describes the expansion of goods, services, labor, and capital across borders that were once considered impregnable. It is, of course, true that this process is motivated less by the Sermon on the Mount than the bottom line. Yet, as John Paul himself points out, "[While] earthly progress must be carefully distinguished from the growth of Christ's kingdom . . . to the extent that the former can contribute to the better ordering of human society, it is of vital concern to the Kingdom of God."

Let's consider some numbers. We know that about three billion people live on less than \$2 a day, and that many treat this as a scandal that cries out for our immediate attention. Fair enough. But there's one question that's rarely asked: What happened to Earth's other three billion? As the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has noted, a good chunk of these people were lifted out of poverty in the last half-century by market openings and the increased trade that followed.

According to the anti-globalizers, all this has been accomplished on the backs of the poorest of the poor. But the research tells a different story. Two economists—David Dollar and Aart Kraay—recently decided to test the numbers by studying the effects of globalization on the poorest fifth of society in eighty countries. What they found exploded the most common myths. First, and most important, they found that as average income rises, the incomes of ordinary poor people rise proportionately—which is another way of saying that growth did reach the poor, dramatically and directly. They also found that the more a country opens itself to trade and investment, the better its poor tend to do. In the words of Dollar and Kraay, "This is not some process of 'trickle down,' which suggests a sequencing in which the rich get richer first and eventually the benefits trickle down to the poor. The evidence, to the contrary, is that private property rights, stability, and openness directly and contemporaneously create a good environment for poor households to increase their productivity and income."

When the poor are separated out by country and region, moreover, astonishing patterns show themselves. For example, half of those who moved out of

poverty within these past two decades were in East Asia—again, in those countries that have been more open to trade and globalization. By contrast, the countries whose poor have done worst are those that have closed themselves off to globalization, most notably Sub-Saharan Africa.

It is worth reflecting on this fact because it suggests that the lessons of globalization are very different than those proposed by the Bishop Weaklands among us. But there is more. In 1994, the World Bank published a report aptly entitled “The East Asian Miracle,” which focused on the performance of the region’s seven most dynamic economies: Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan, and Indonesia. Since 1960, these economies “have grown more than twice as fast as the rest of East Asia, roughly three times as fast as Latin America and South Asia, and five times faster than Sub-Saharan Africa. They also significantly outperformed the industrial economies and the oil-rich Middle East-North Africa region. Between 1960 and 1985, real income per capita increased more than four times in Japan and the Four Tigers and more than doubled in Southeast Asian [newly industrialized nations].” And here’s the most startling fact of all: “If growth were randomly distributed, there is roughly one chance in ten thousand that success would have been so regionally concentrated.” It is worth noting too that, contrary to what our anticapitalists would predict, in most of these Asian nations economic inequality has been reduced rather than increased.

Which brings us back to where we began. If you follow the business press, the story I’ve told will be familiar. But if you primarily read the religious press, it might come as a bit of a shock. In a database search of four representative Catholic publications—*Commonweal*, *America*, *U.S. Catholic*, and the *National Catholic Reporter*—I discovered a sorry state of affairs. Searching for articles that contained the words “globalization” or “trade,” I found 1,163 stories. Here are some typical headlines:

- “Nearly 1 billion starve while markets boom” (*NCR*)
- “Gumbleton says United States has unjust amount of wealth” (*NCR*)
- “Making Profit the World’s Highest Law” (*NCR*)
- “A New Imperialism” (*Commonweal*)
- “Global Village or Global Pillage?” (*Commonweal*)
- “Who Pays the Price for Trade: Farmers, Workers and the Unemployed” (*Commonweal*)
- “Which Mexico Is It? Globalization is the new form of slavery, dressed in the camouflage of the so-called market economy” (*America*)
- “Globalization Under Siege” (*America*)

The almost complete indifference of these influential publications to the extraordinary human benefits of capitalist expansion suggests that something more than ignorance is at work. It suggests that the ideological commitments of many of our religiously informed activists, writers, and leaders have led to self-inflicted blindness.

Today it is possible to read most of the Catholic press devoted to these issues—and I include the diocesan papers, the bishops letters, the conferences, etc.—without ever coming across an elemental understanding of what truly makes poor countries prosper and what keeps them impoverished. You’d never know, for example, that there are factories in developing nations that *aren’t* sweatshops. That many people now have opportunities their parents only dreamed about. That more of their children are going to school. That in a place such as China, which scarcely a generation ago had to contend with starvation, people are now eating better than anyone has in previous history. And you’d never know that most of these countries beg for capitalist investment, because they understand that it is the only way to create jobs and prosperity.

Is the answer, then, to trade in the Gospel of St. Matthew for *The Wealth of Nations*? Hardly. As John Paul has noted on more than one occasion, however beneficial the market may be, there are things that it does not do well because it is not supposed to do them at all. And even when it does the right things well, those things must be done in an environment that orients them toward the greater good. Indeed, because the market excels at efficiency, there will always be a need for a check against its tendency to extend its writ too far. But the need for such limits does not point toward socialism. Rather, it points toward capitalism, rightly understood. As the Pope has written in *Centesimus Annus* as to whether, after the collapse of socialism, capitalism should be our goal:

If by capitalism is meant economic systems which recognize the fundamental and positive role of business, the market, private property, and the resulting responsibility for the means of production, as well as free creativity in the economic sector, the answer is certainly in the affirmative, even though it would perhaps be more appropriate to speak of a “business economy,” “market economy,” or simply “free economy.” But if by “capitalism” is meant a system in which freedom in the economic sector is not circumscribed within a strong juridical framework which places it at the service of freedom in its totality, and which sees it as a particular aspect of that freedom, the core of which is ethical and religious, then the reply is certainly negative.

Many of those less friendly to the market than the Pope seem to be under the impression that when he talks about a framework circumscribing the market, he means some kind of mixed system halfway between the efficiency of the market and the “ideal” of socialism—that elusive “third way” that former Czech President Vaclav Klaus has said is the surest path to the Third World. And many of these market critics often quote other encyclicals, such as *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987), to suggest that the Pope has made completely contrary statements. But I don’t believe it makes sense to read the Holy Father as a schizophrenic. This is especially clear when he insists that the problem of socialism is primarily a problem of anthropology rather than economics.

For John Paul, socialism turned out the way it did—anti-growth, anti-human, and anti-worker—because it was based on a false understanding of human nature. And indeed the Pope wants to temper capitalism, not so much with regulations or policies (though some regulations or policies may be an outcome of such tempering) as with a vibrant moral culture within which the market operates. This is a culture that puts man at its heart, respectful of his God-given dignity and insistent on an understanding of labor that allows each man not only to have but to be. This is a culture, in the Pope’s words, of solidarity.

This is a lesson that the best economists have begun to learn—namely, that the economy is not a realm that can sustain itself alone. Capitalism is, after all, far from being value-free. It elevates the straight and narrow over the free and easy, and as such depends on virtues such as thrift, sobriety, and enterprise that must come from extra-economic sources.

Of course, the relationship between buyer and seller is not the love of neighbor commanded by the gospel. But it is not as far removed as we might think. In the market we expect to be treated decently. And surely one measure of solidarity is the creation of structures that give the poor the ability to sell the fruits of their labors to all the world—and to buy from that world what it can give them.

In this regard it is helpful to remember that there is a fundamental difference between a pro-market econo-

my and a pro-business economy. It was, after all, Adam Smith and not Karl Marx who said that seldom do men of the same trade gather except to conspire against the common good. That’s why competition is so important, morally as well as economically. Because as any worker in the Third World can tell you, the absence of competition is not cooperation. It’s collusion.

Within the structure of markets and competition, there still remains plenty of room for redressing injustices and taking the side of the weak against the powerful. As the leaders of the developing world are well aware, one of the tremendous problems they face is First World protectionism that excludes them from our markets. In fact, we in the First World have traditionally been most protectionist in textiles and agriculture—two markets that poor countries can best compete in. This protectionism can take many forms. Think, for a recent example, of the strenuous opposition to George W. Bush’s decision to let Mexican truckers on American roads.

In any event, it seems clear to me that theologians and economists need each other. Theologians and religiously informed activists need to have some grasp of how the economy really works if their critiques are to be accurate and effective. And market economists, if they are not to succumb to the same hubris as the socialists, need a religiously informed culture to remind them that economics is made for man and not vice versa.

The Pope has said repeatedly that man’s destiny is freedom. An economics that understands this destiny will yield societies happier and healthier than the ones that see man as an animal raping the earth and breeding to his own destruction. The point is not that globalization is without its problems, but rather that even with all these problems it remains arguably the brightest hope on earth for the half of the planet that still lacks genuine opportunity. It strikes me as difficult to square the demands of the gospel with the idea that economics is a dismal science. If this is the way we must look at the process that has brought so many millions out of poverty, then our quarrel is not so much with Adam Smith or Milton Friedman but with the Providence that so clearly designed man to prosper in his freedom. FT

Purgatory for Everyone

Jerry L. Walls

A few years ago, the journalist Philip Nobile wrote an article near the first anniversary of the death of Princess Diana in which he raised what he termed “an indiscreet theological question.” “Where is she now?” he asked. According to Christian theology, the options were heaven, purgatory, or hell. Given Diana’s well-publicized lifestyle, Nobile suggested that the case for heaven was weak. A better case could be made for hell, given the likelihood that Diana was in a state of mortal sin at the moment of her death. Nobile thus found it curious that the Pope gave positive indications about Diana’s salvation when the following message of condolence was sent on his behalf to Queen Elizabeth: “The Holy Father has offered prayers summoning her to our Heavenly Father’s eternal love.” As Nobile observed, this remark implied Diana was in purgatory.

Now Nobile certainly did not intend his article to serve as a defense of orthodoxy. Yet it raises a substantive issue that Christians who take the afterlife seriously cannot evade. Many believers have attended funerals in which the deceased are declared to be enjoying all the glories of heaven, regardless of their somewhat less-than-saintly behavior in life. At best, such occasions are examples of understandable pastoral efforts to comfort grieving loved ones. But at worst, they may be sentimental exercises that trivialize the most central beliefs of the Christian faith.

What I have in mind are the many beliefs shared by Roman Catholics and evangelicals concerning, in particular, the nature of salvation. This growing consensus was expressed most notably in “The Gift of Salvation,” a

document signed by a number of leading Roman Catholic and evangelical spokesmen, which reiterates the classical view that there is a close relationship between justification and sanctification. Salvation, in this view, is far more than forgiveness of our sins; it is also a matter of thorough moral and spiritual transformation. The document stresses this point by denying that faith is mere intellectual assent and asserting that it is “an act of the whole person, involving the mind, the will, and the affections, issuing in a changed life.” It then goes on to insist that Christians are bound by their faith and baptism “to live according to the law of love in obedience to Jesus Christ the Lord. Scripture calls this the life of holiness or sanctification.”

It is here that “an indiscreet theological question” must be faced. If salvation essentially involves transformation—and, at that same time, we cannot be united with God unless we are holy—what becomes of those who plead the atonement of Christ for salvation but die before they have been thoroughly transformed? These people will have accepted the truth about God and themselves through repentance and faith, but their character will not have been made perfect. Their sanctification has begun but it remains incomplete. Such people do not seem to be ready for a heaven of perfect love and fellowship with God, but neither should they be consigned to hell.

It is this basic difficulty that led to the formulation of the doctrine of purgatory in the first place. While the doctrine was not fully developed until the Middle Ages, the seeds from which it grew go back at least to the Church Fathers, if not to Scripture itself. Cyprian (c. 200-258), for instance, struggled with the question of what to think about Christians who had weakened under persecution. Likewise, Augustine (354-430), the fountainhead of Western theology, reflected in several

JERRY L. WALLS is Professor of Philosophy of Religion at Asbury Theological Seminary. He is the author of *Heaven: The Logic of Eternal Joy* (forthcoming from Oxford University Press), from which this essay is adapted.

passages on the kinds of issues that would eventually be resolved in Roman Catholic theology by the doctrine of purgatory. (Of course, the doctrine also has roots in the popular conviction that the living might in some fashion influence the dead, particularly by prayer.)

While the doctrine is most fully developed in Roman Catholic theology, a version of it is also affirmed by some Eastern Orthodox theologians. The main difference between them is that Roman Catholics have traditionally viewed purgatory as a place of temporal punishment for individuals who have not sufficiently repented before death, whereas Eastern theologians view it as a process of growth and maturation for persons who have not completed the sanctification process.

Despite widespread acceptance of the doctrine of purgatory in some form, Protestants, by and large, have traditionally rejected the notion out of hand. The roots of this rejection go back, of course, to the Reformation, and it is well known that purgatory was deeply connected with the most basic and bitter disputes that split the Western Church. Among these disputes is the Protestant notion of *sola scriptura*, the view that Scripture alone is the source and authority for doctrine. Many Protestants would summarily dispense with purgatory on the ground that it is not mentioned in Scripture, at least not obviously so, a point that is generally conceded even by the defenders of the doctrine.

The fact that purgatory is not expressly present in Scripture is not enough to settle the issue, however. The deeper issue is whether it is a reasonable inference from important truths that are clearly found there. If theology involves a degree of disciplined speculation and logical inference, then the doctrine of purgatory cannot simply be dismissed on the grounds that Scripture does not explicitly articulate it.

Moreover, the prevailing doctrine of purgatory at the time of the Reformation was related to some of the worst abuses in the Church, particularly the sale of indulgences, a practice that many saw as a denial that we are saved through faith in Christ. It is no wonder, in light of this history, that the doctrine has provoked such strong reactions among Protestants. The larger issues and passions involved in this controversy are reflected in the words of Calvin, who wrote that “we must cry out with the shouting not only of our voices but our throats and lungs that purgatory is a deadly fiction of Satan, which nullifies the cross of Christ, inflicts unbearable contempt upon God’s mercy, and overturns and destroys our faith.” The attitude had not changed much in Reformed theology by the nineteenth century when Charles Hodge, the great Princeton theologian, wrote his classic systematic theology. Hodge noted that Roman Catholics tended to vary their account of purga-

tory depending on the audience. Protestants were presented with a mild form of the doctrine, while Catholics depicted it for themselves in severe terms. Hodge thus saw purgatory as “a tremendous engine of priestly power. The feet of the tiger withdrawn are as soft as velvet; when those claws are extended, they are fearful instruments of laceration and death.”

In the past few decades, by contrast, purgatory has lost much of its controversial edge. This is no doubt largely due to the decline of interest in the doctrine among Catholics, even among those who continue officially to affirm it. And while Protestants still generally repudiate the notion, the matter incites much less fervor than it did in previous generations.

In my view, it is long past time to reassess purgatory and the theological problems it was originally intended to solve. I write as a member of the Wesleyan tradition, a strand of Protestantism that emphasizes sanctification and moral transformation in its account of salvation. In agreement with the Great Tradition of Christian teaching, Wesleyans reject the notion that salvation is only, or even primarily, a forensic matter of having the righteousness of Christ imputed or attributed to believers. Wesleyans insist that God not only forgives us but also changes us and actually makes us righteous. Only when we are entirely sanctified or fully perfected in this sense are we truly fit to enjoy the beatific vision in heaven.

But what of Protestants who emphasize the forensic aspect of salvation? How have they resolved the problem of sin and moral imperfection that remains in the lives of believers at the time of death? They agree, after all, that nothing impure or unholy can enter heaven and they also typically hold that most, if not all, believers are far from perfection when they die. The typical answer echoes the view eloquently expressed by Jonathan Edwards.

At death the believer not only gains a perfect and eternal deliverance from sin and temptation, but is adorned with a perfect and glorious holiness. The work of sanctification is then completed, and the beautiful image of God has then its finishing strokes by the pencil of God, and begins to shine forth with a heavenly beauty like a seraphim.

In other words, the work that believers in the broader Catholic tradition ascribe to purgatory is, for most Protestants, accomplished immediately, and apparently painlessly, by a unilateral act of God at death.

An important variation on this theme appears in the theology of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. Unlike most Protestant theologians, Wesley believed

that complete sanctification is possible in this life. In his model of the order of salvation, such sanctification can be received in a moment of faith analogous to the way justification is accepted by faith. Wesley also stressed the progressive dimension of sanctification and thought that entire sanctification could not normally be received without years of gradual growth and progress in grace and holiness. But what is significant for our purposes is that Wesley believed that, in most cases, complete sanctification takes place at “the instant of death, the moment before the soul leaves the body.”

Interestingly enough, current Catholic thought seems to be converging with Protestantism on this matter. Many contemporary Catholic theologians argue that purification occurs in the act and experience of dying. This view can also be detected in the attitudes of the many lay Catholics who affirm the existence of purgatory but think it need be endured for but a momentary period—well in time for the funeral eulogy! A consensus thus seems to be forming that our sanctification is completed either during the experience of death or immediately thereafter.

I want to argue, however, that the traditional doctrine of purgatory is far more coherent for Protestants and Catholics alike. The most basic problem for those who hold that sanctification is instantly completed at the moment of death, as Anglican theologian David Brown has pointed out, is that “there is no way of rendering such an abrupt transition in essentially temporal beings conceivable.” One way to avoid this problem is to appeal to the highly controversial doctrine of God’s timelessness and to maintain that after death we share in this condition, thereby rendering temporal considerations irrelevant. The matter of God’s relationship to time is one of the most vexing problems in the philosophy of religion, and it would take us far afield to discuss it. I will simply register the fact that I have doubts about the coherence of the doctrine of timelessness, so I do not think this move solves the problem.

More plausible is the attempt to conceive of sanctification along the lines of abrupt and dramatic conversions in this life. But as Brown also points out, there is good reason to think that such dramatic turnarounds have important antecedent causes that lead up to and prepare their way. Moreover, while outward change of behavior may occur rather dramatically, internal change of character is another matter. Real virtue is achieved over a period of time by numerous choices and decisions, often in the face of adversity. Brown concludes that if man is essentially temporal, “his capacity for moral perfection is likewise. No clear sense attaches to the claim that a human being could become instantaneously virtuous, morally perfect, and so, if God is to respect our nature as essentially temporal beings, He

must have allowed for an intermediate state of purgatory to exist.”

It is just this sort of consideration that led Wesley to insist that sanctification must normally be preceded by a significant period of growth and maturation. Without this process, one is not prepared to receive the fullness of grace sanctification represents. If this basic line of thought is correct, there is good reason to think that something like the traditional notion of purgatory is indeed necessary for those who have not experienced significant growth and moral progress.

The classical notion of purgatory also seems necessary to a related issue in the process of sanctification: our free participation in it. Many Christian theologians have held that our necessary cooperation in our transformation constitutes the only satisfactory explanation for the bewildering array of good and evil in the world. God takes our freedom seriously and is patient with it; He recognizes that even those who have made an initial decision to follow His will often make only sporadic or inconsistent progress in carrying out their resolution. In this view, while it is God who enables and elicits our transformation each step of the way, our cooperation with His will is necessary to our sanctification.

Now if God deals with us this way in this life, it is reasonable to think He will continue to do so in the next life until our perfection is achieved. Indeed, the point should be put more strongly than this. If God is willing to dispense with our free cooperation in the next life, it is hard to see why He would not do so now, particularly in view of the high price of freedom in terms of evil and suffering.

In the same vein, Anglican philosopher of religion Eleonore Stump has explicated the sanctification process by employing her fellow philosopher Harry Frankfurt’s notion of a self as hierarchically ordered desires. Of particular interest is the distinction between first- and second-order desires. First-order desires are basic desires such as, for example, Abelard’s desire to seduce Heloise. Second-order desires are desires about first-order desires. So, recognizing the spiritual and moral liabilities in seducing Heloise, not to mention the possibility of inciting her uncle’s wrath, Abelard may wish he did not have such desires for Heloise. That is, he may have a second-order desire that his first-order desires were different.

Now Stump suggests that sanctification occurs with our freedom intact if God changes us at the level of our first-order desires in response to our second-order desires that He do so. Of course, God’s grace also enables us to have the appropriate second-order desires. Stump’s picture, however, raises another question about the nature of the divine-human cooperation in sanctification. Why wouldn’t a person’s sanctification be complete the instant he formed the second-

order desire to be sanctified? The answer, Stump replies, is that

the content of this volition is vague. It consists in a general submission to God and an effective desire to let God remake one's character. But a willingness of this sort is psychologically compatible with stubbornly holding on to any number of sins. . . . Making a sinner righteous, then, will be a process in which a believer's specific volitions are brought into harmony with the governing second-order volition assenting to God's bringing her to righteousness, with the consequent gradual alteration in first-order volitions, as well as in intellect and emotions.

Stump goes on to comment that this is a "process extending through this life and culminating in the next." Although this is not an explicit defense of purgatory, such a doctrine seems to be the natural extension of her line of thought.

The reason that the desire for sanctity may be psychologically compatible with holding on to any number of sins is that one may not clearly recognize them as sins or perceive their destructiveness to the point of truly wishing to be delivered from them. The process of sanctification involves coming to see the truth about not only our overt sinful actions, but also about the more subtle sinful attitudes we may cherish. A broad desire to be sanctified simply may not recognize all that is involved; that's why it takes time and growth for grace to penetrate the deeper recesses of our sinful characters.

Of course, the process must culminate at some point, and there is no reason why it may not reach its end in an act of faith in this life, just as Wesley believed it could. But the significant point is that considerable growth is required before such a stage can be reached. And if this growth has not occurred in this life, purgatory seems necessary if God is to complete the job with our freedom intact.

These accounts of purgatory underscore the notion that no one can be exempted from the requirement of achieving perfect sanctity in cooperation with God's grace and initiative. It is also important to reiterate here that, as beings who exist in time, our transformation must be a cooperative venture. It takes time to gain understanding of the various layers of our sinfulness and self-deception, as well as to own the truth about ourselves. Discerning truth and allowing it to transform our character is an essentially mental experience that requires time. The doctrine of purgatory makes clear that there is no shortcut to sanctity.

The doctrine of purgatory also reminds us that the most pervasive and deadly sins are those of the spirit.

Spiritual sins are not cured merely by dropping our old bodies and receiving new ones. Consider in this light the words of Edwards: "The saved soul leaves all its sin with the body; when it puts off the body of the man, it puts off the body of sin with it. When the body is buried, all sin is buried forever, and though the soul shall be joined to the body again, yet sin shall never return more." Implicit in this argument is a sort of gnosticism that locates sin in our physical bodies. It is as if sanctification were largely effected by releasing the soul from the body. Again, this makes sanctification a passive matter that requires no cooperation on our part.

It is at this point of our cooperation that Protestant objections to purgatory become most pointed, even in our ecumenical age. To take our role in sanctification so seriously that purgatory seems to be required inevitably provokes loud protests concerning works righteousness. Contemporary theologian Millard Erickson speaks for many of his fellow evangelicals when he writes, "In both this life and the life to come, the basis of the believer's relationship with God is grace, not works. There need be no fear, then, that our imperfections will require some type of post-death purging before we can enter the full presence of God."

Some Protestants go so far as to insist that purgatory amounts to a denial of justification by faith. I would insist, however, that it all depends on what one means by *justification* and by *faith*. As Alister McGrath has shown, the traditional view was that justification involves actually making us righteous, and that this is what finally restores us to a loving relationship with God. It was a Protestant innovation to separate justification from sanctification and to construe the former primarily in legal and forensic terms. But since justification so understood does not make us actually righteous, it is simply irrelevant as an objection to purgatory.

Erickson's objection misses the mark for similar reasons. To insist that we must be fully transformed by freely cooperating with God before we can fully enter His presence is not a denial of the fact that grace is the basis of our relationship with Him. For His grace is precisely what takes the initiative and enables our transformation. Erickson's objection to purgatory implies that grace is primarily, if not exclusively, a matter of forgiveness. It is this narrowly forensic conception of grace that must be challenged.

Appealing to God's forgiveness does nothing to address the fact that many Christians are imperfect lovers of God (and others) at the time of their death. This is not to say that the experience of being forgiven does not change us. Indeed, gratitude for God's free offer of forgiveness is a powerful incentive for the believer to love God in return. But forgiveness alone, especially on a legal model, does not change us in a sub-

jective sense. Consider in this light the words of C. S. Lewis, an author whose views are usually endorsed enthusiastically by evangelical Protestants.

Our souls *demand* purgatory, don't they? Would it not break the heart if God said to us, "It is true, my son, that your breath smells and your rags drip with mud and slime, but we are charitable here and no one will upbraid you with these things, nor draw away from you. Enter into the joy"? Should we not reply, "With submission, sir, and if there is no objection, I'd rather be cleansed first"? "It may hurt, you know."—"Even so, sir."

Forgiveness alone does not eliminate unpleasant odors, and lack of condemnation does not clean up soiled clothes. Other remedies are necessary, and as Lewis suggests, they may involve pain.

The invocation of pain has also been a major source of resistance to the doctrine of purgatory. At its best, this is an understandable reaction to the rather lurid depictions of purgatory that have appeared in some Roman Catholic writers in the past. At worst, however, it smacks of the sort of cheap grace, pervasive in much popular contemporary piety, which implies that mere mental assent to some basic Christian doctrines is all that is necessary for salvation. On this picture, salvation is a perfectly painless thing that requires nothing of the believer but simple faith.

Lewis insists, by contrast, that the moral transformation necessary for salvation is essentially painful. The pain of moral growth and progress is not an arbitrary punishment that God attaches to it; rather, the pain is intrinsic to it. Lewis makes this point vividly in several memorable images in *The Great Divorce*. For instance, the fact that the grass in heaven hurts the feet of the ghosts from the gray town (purgatory for those who choose to leave it, hell for those who stay) shows that becoming conformed to the life of heaven is uncomfortable for sinful persons. "Reality is harsh to the feet of shadows." The promise is given, however, that those who are willing to persevere will eventually become more substantial, and thus more comfortable, in heaven.

Purgatory enables us fully to come to terms with reality. Richard Purtill has suggested that the period between our death and resurrection will be a time of "reading" our lives like a book. The entire book would

be present to us and we could reread past sections, skip ahead, and so on. All of this reading would be done in what he calls "Godlight." That is, it would be a matter of coming to see our lives as God sees them. This would involve, for instance, seeing the full force of how our sins affected others. "The only adequate purgatory might be to suffer what you made others suffer—not just an equivalent pain, but that pain, seeing yourself as the tormentor you were to them. Only then could you adequately reject and repent the evil." The other side of the coin is that we "would see with love even those who have hurt us, because God saw them with love."

Indeed, the accent here should fall on grace, for to see things in "Godlight" is to see them illumined by God's perfect love for all persons and His will to redeem us from our sins and unite us to Himself and to each other. Continuing the reading analogy, Purtill points out that, although the first time we read a book we may hardly appreciate it, a subsequent reading may fully disclose its beauty and richness.

As we may write a commentary on a book that has meant much to us, so part of our afterlife could be an appreciation and correction of our present lives. Even if our present lives have been almost a failure—even if we are barely saved after a life of folly and waste—we could still make these wasted lives the foundation of something glorious—a "commentary" much better than the "book."

Purgatory so conceived is not only a matter of taking our choices and our freedom seriously, it is more importantly a matter of taking seriously God's overwhelmingly gracious love to us and His power to redeem our lives, even "wasted" ones.

Construed along these lines, purgatory can rightly be characterized as a time and place of joy. While popular images of purgatory may evoke negative thoughts, we should recall that the New Testament frequently teaches Christians to rejoice in the adversity that purifies our faith. This is not to trivialize the pain of purgatory, but rather to point out that it should not be dreaded any more than the pain of moral transformation that we experience in this life.

Indeed, all believers, regardless of tradition, who have experienced as joy the purging involved in drawing closer to Christ can view the concept of purgatory not only as a natural doctrinal development, but also as a gracious gift of love. FT

Just War: An Exchange

Paul J. Griffiths

The response of American Catholic intellectuals to the events of September 11 and their aftermath has been profoundly disappointing to anyone looking for some genuinely Catholic thinking. Most of what's been written and said by Catholic chatterers on left and right is Catholic in only the most superficial way: just war theory is talked about and magisterial documents appealed to, but only to ornament and defend convictions arrived at on quite other grounds, convictions dreadfully predictable from their proponents' location on the American political spectrum.

For the right, the U.S.-led military action in Afghanistan has been not only morally defensible but obviously so, and claims to the contrary exhibit moral idiocy; for the left, it is equally obvious that there is rough moral parity between the U.S. government and al-Qaeda, and that what America has done and is doing in Afghanistan cannot successfully be defended. There are intermediate positions, of course; but what left-Catholics and right-Catholics have mostly exhibited, wherever exactly they are on the political spectrum, is a failure to think first as Catholics by succumbing to the temptation to think first as Americans.

These comments are intended as a corrective, a brief Catholic meditation on September 11 and its consequences. More specifically, they address the following question: Should American Catholics have supported or endorsed the U.S. government's declared intention to use lethal military force against the government and people of Afghanistan as an element of its response to September 11?

First, there is the question of the burden of proof. Clarity about this is essential, for from it all else flows. And the Catholic tradition is in fact abundantly clear

about where the burden of proof lies when the possible use of lethal military force by a nation is concerned. It lies with those who would endorse or advocate it. Catholic citizens of the U.S. must, therefore, assume that a planned use of lethal military force by their country is illegitimate and unjust until this burden has been met. Good, convincing evidence must be brought to rebut this assumption; only then may a Catholic citizen endorse what is planned. The situation is closely analogous to that facing a jury in a U.S. court of law: the working assumption should be that the defendant is innocent, and the prosecution must rebut that assumption if the jury is properly to find the defendant guilty. Similarly, Catholics must begin by assuming that their country is unjustified in planning to use lethal military force, and must then await the meeting of the burden of proof.

Some Catholic commentators have claimed otherwise. George Weigel has been particularly vociferous on the burden-of-proof question. But he and others like him are, on this matter, bewitched by their political convictions into abandoning the grammar of the faith and thereby misrepresenting Catholic teaching to others. Anyone who doubts this should read those sections of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that deal with the Fifth Commandment, and most especially those sections (beginning at §2302) that treat the safeguarding of peace. The *Catechism's* analysis makes sense only if the *onus probandi* lies with those who would argue that a particular decision to use lethal military force is just. They must show that the *ius ad bellum* criteria are met, and until they do Catholics must rest, happily or otherwise, with the default assumption that the planned use of lethal military force is not just—which means that, in the particular case before us, we American Catholics should not have supported our country's decision to use lethal military force against the government and people of Afghanistan until the burden of proof had been met.

So now the question is: Has the U.S. met the burden of proof? The answer is no—not before bombing began last October, and not even now that the Taliban have been replaced with a coalition government. Those who think that the burden of proof was met make a simple but damaging error: they are guilty of epistemic immodesty. That is, they think they are in a position to know more than they are in fact in a position to know, and as a result they make decisions that should not be made. The decision in question, recall, is whether to endorse an action that will kill large numbers of human beings, people made in God's image, people for whom Christ died. No Catholic should endorse such an action lightly or easily. The very thought of doing so should produce horror, a wail of anticipatory lament and repentance, and this means that the burden of proof is heavy. To meet it, much good evidence and argument is needed.

Where is the evidence and argument to come from? How is the heavy burden to be met? Do we American Catholics have sources on which we can rely? We do not. Our principal sources are three: the U.S. government itself, in the person of those appointed to speak for it; the U.S. media; and foreign governments and media. But we have no good reason to think that any of these sources is sufficiently reliable to provide what we need, and we therefore also have no good reason to think that we have access to the evidence and argument we would need if we were to judge the burden of proof to be met. From which it follows rapidly, and by necessity, that we may not endorse our country's decision to use lethal military force against the government and people of Afghanistan.

You may think that the U.S. government is a reliable source. But you would be wrong to think so. It is among the functions of government in time of war or contemplated war to combine an active withholding of relevant information from its citizens with the purveying of falsehoods to them. This is as true of democratic governments as of others. Both the British and American governments withheld and lied in a more or less systematic fashion during World War II, for example, and there are no convincing counterexamples in modern times to the generalization that this is simply what governments do in times of war. A judicious mixture of deceit and omission is a proper function of government at such times, and, at least since the post-Westphalian modern nation-state came into being and the technology of information dissemination reached its twentieth-century level of sophistication, there is no effective way for Catholic citizens to find their way to the argument and evidence they would need in order to assent to a rebuttal of the assumption that their country's use of lethal military force is not justified.

The American media are of little help here. The mass media, print and electronic, are jingoistic and blink-

ered, obsessed with the national interest and with the details of particular human tragedies at the expense of analysis of the global situation. The small weeklies and monthlies, while they exhibit a broader range of opinion, clearly have access to no better information than do the mass media. If there is a supportable generalization that can be made about the media's record of effective prediction of outcomes based upon analysis of available information during the last several months, it is that it is abysmal—and this is true across the political spectrum. And yet what is needed to meet the burden of proof is precisely the kind of evidence and argument that would permit effective prognosis.

Consulting non-U.S. media, whether European or Islamic, provides some help (one can at least find out thereby what spokesmen for radical Islamic groups actually say, something almost impossible to glean from American media); but the mendacity, blindness, and stupidity to be found in those sources go just as deep as they do in the U.S. case, and are just as hard to pick one's way through.

So: Catholic citizens of the U.S. do not have and cannot get the evidence and argument they would need to rebut the assumption that lethal military force ought not be used. From which it follows that we ought to continue in that assumption. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

Two implications of this argument need to be underlined. The first is that nothing in it speaks to the question of whether the military action of recent months is or is not just (and, of course, nothing in it even approaches the question of whether the mode of its conduct is just). The argument speaks only to the question of whether American Catholics have been or are now in a position to judge it just. The second is that the argument offered here is, if good, generalizable to all such situations in modern nation-states: it is intrinsic to the nature of such states, and to the technology of information dissemination in them, that their Catholic citizens cannot in time of war or planned war come to know what they would need to know in order to abandon the Catholic default assumption.

This is interestingly parallel to recent developments in Catholic thought about the use of the death penalty. The change on that topic has occurred in response to the increased effectiveness of modern penal systems: when it is possible to protect society from killers and rapists without killing them, this, so the Church teaches, should be done. And changes in technology and attitudes toward life imprisonment make it possible. This produces an effective ban on capital punishment in countries with efficient penal systems, even though the judgment that capital punishment may in some circumstances be required and proper remains in force. Similarly, *mutatis mutandis*, with *ius ad bellum* judgments: changes in the

organization of states and in information technology may (and in my view should) lead to an effective ban on judgment by Catholic citizens that a particular war ought to be undertaken. And this is entirely compatible with the claim that in fact some wars are just.

Why, then, don't more American Catholics think along the lines I've just laid out? For the chatterers there are two dominant causes, neither creditable and both sinful.

The first I've already mentioned: epistemic immodesty, the characteristic sin of the chatterers (I am subject to it, which is why I can speak of it with authority). You are epistemically immodest if you assume that you know more than you do (or can) know. To confess that you have inadequate information and that your attempts to assess the likely geopolitical outcomes of planned military action are almost certain to be wrong will not come easily if you belong to the chattering classes. What will come easily is the bombast of false certainty and the misplaced confidence of the self-styled expert. There has been a great deal of both in the last several months. But the truth is that as bombing began in October, and now as Indian and Pakistani armies mass along the border between those countries, no one has much chance of accurately assessing outcomes. The sin of intellectual pride prevents the confession of this truth; the same sin leads almost inevitably to epistemic immodesty.

The second cause that prevents Catholic chatterers in the U.S. from acknowledging the truths I have laid out is worse. It is an unthinking adherence to the doctrine of American exceptionalism, the view that the U.S. is somehow exempt from judgment and constraint by the teaching of the Church because it is in some morally significant sense a nation like no other. Extremist American exceptionalists think that everything the U.S. does and advocates is good, that this should be obvious to all, and that it permits—perhaps even requires—abrogation of the teaching of the Church about war. American exceptionalists are often puzzled by the fact that not everyone acknowledges the obvious goodness of the U.S., and this is worth noting because the use of tropes of obviousness and self-evidence in the political discourse of the U.S. from the founding until now is an essential ingredient to American exceptionalism in both its left and right versions. For the true-blue Catholic American exceptionalist, then, American wars are always good ones, and the burden of proof is thus shifted to those who would object to any one of them. But American exceptionalism is idolatry—whether in its right-Catholic version (America is always right) or in its left-Catholic version (America is always wrong)—and therefore a sin.

The truth is that America is a nation not exempt from the moral and practical judgments of Catholic doctrine, and that loyalty to the U.S. on the part of U.S.

Catholics is a proper but subsidiary loyalty—deeply subsidiary, I would add. E. M. Forster, certainly no Catholic, said that if he was forced to choose between betraying his country and betraying his friends, he hoped he would have the courage to betray his country. He was right. And a Catholic should add that if it comes to a choice between betraying the U.S. and betraying the Church and its teaching, the choice is even more obvious.

If we Catholic chatterers in the U.S. could renounce the presumption of epistemic immodesty and the idolatry of American exceptionalism, we would see that we ought not to have judged the U.S. decision to use lethal military violence against the government and people of Afghanistan to be just. We would, instead, have devoted ourselves to prayer, fasting, and lament, and would be continuing to do so—as the Pope formally required of us on December 14, 2001.

It remains to note the chief difficulty with the position I have sketched here. It is that the Catholic hierarchy in the U.S.—and, though with more ambiguity, the Pope himself—have judged the American action in Afghanistan to be just. My own bishop, Francis Cardinal George of Chicago, unambiguously did so last October. I take this seriously: like all Catholics, I am under authority. But, humbly and correctibly, I take these claims by those who teach the Church to be prudential judgments, based, probably, on no better information than I have myself; from such judgments, I may faithfully, though humbly, dissent. These judgments do not have immediately or obviously to do with matters of faith or morals, but rather with the application of such matters to a particular situation. And so I do faithfully dissent from the application, awaiting further instruction in the doctrine. In this, I hope and intend, I exhibit a Catholic *habitus* notably lacking among those who have hailed this war as just, and who have done violence thereby to the teaching of the Church.

PAUL J. GRIFFITHS is Schmitt Professor of Catholic Studies at the University of Illinois in Chicago.

George Weigel

Professor Paul Griffiths is quite right that there is a new “default position” in contemporary Catholic commentary on war and peace. I don't think he parses it adequately, though. The new Catholic “default position” is more accurately described as a functional pacifism that mistakenly imagines itself an authentic development of the just war tradition.

The new “default position” has a history, as I tried to demonstrate (in what some might call excruciating

detail) in my 1987 study *Tranquillitas Ordinis: The Present Failure and Future Promise of American Catholic Thought on War and Peace*. Taking its lead from a misreading of Vatican II's injunction to examine the moral problem of war and peace "with an entirely new attitude," the new "default position" first shaped antiwar Catholic commentary and activism during Vietnam, a period in which many Catholic activists (and more than a few intellectuals) abandoned the Church's classic thinking about peace and its relationship to the just war tradition. After Vietnam, the "default position" migrated from the activist world to the Catholic hierarchy, where it had a significant influence on the 1983 pastoral letter of the U.S. Catholic bishops, "The Challenge of Peace." The "default position" is now well entrenched in Catholic leadership and activist circles in North America and Western Europe; it also has numerous adherents in the Vatican bureaucracy.

The question is whether this new "default position" and its extreme skepticism about any legitimate use of military force—a skepticism that leads, in practice, to what I called above "functional pacifism"—is a truly Catholic position. That it is taught, wittingly or not, by some bishops does not ipso facto establish its claim to Catholicity. That claim could only be established by showing that the new "default position" is in continuity with the great tradition of Catholic thought on war and peace. And that, I suggest, cannot be done.

The central and oft-repeated claim of the new Catholic "default position" is that just war thinking begins with a "presumption against violence." To which it must be said, bluntly: it does not. As James Turner Johnson, the English-speaking world's foremost historian of the just war tradition, has argued time and again, the tradition begins with the "presumption"—better, the classic moral judgment—that the sovereign has a moral duty to pursue the public good, even at the risk of his own life. That is why Thomas Aquinas located his just war discussion in the *Summa* within his treatise on charity; that is why Paul Ramsey, who revived Protestant just war thinking in the United States in the decades after World War II, taught that the just war tradition is an attempt to think through the public meaning of the great commandment of loving our neighbor. The public good is the *telos* of just war thinking; defending and advancing the public good is what legitimate governments are for; and that is why provision for the common defense is a moral obligation of states, not an option.

The just war tradition begins, in other words, with a judgment about the moral obligations of rightly constituted public authority. Just war thinking starts with a "presumption for justice," not a "presumption against violence."

In suggesting the reverse, the new Catholic "default position" confuses ends and means and makes a tremendous hash out of moral reasoning—and out of the history of theology. Just how much a hash was vividly brought home to me in a public debate two weeks after September 11. There, a prominent Jesuit social ethicist and long-time advisor to the U.S. bishops argued that, of course, the just war tradition begins with a "presumption against violence": Didn't Aquinas begin the relevant article in the *Summa* with the question, "Whether It Is Always Wrong to Wage War?" Here was irrefutable methodological proof that St. Thomas accepted the "presumption against violence" starting point. I was dumbfounded, and after making sure that I had heard my colleague correctly, replied that Aquinas had begun the article on the existence of God with the question, "Whether God Exists?"—which did not, in my view, amount to a "presumption for atheism" on St. Thomas' part.

In any event, the presumption *for justice*, and for rightly ordered public authority's moral obligation to pursue justice, is what sets the horizon for moral analysis in just war thinking. Classic Catholic international relations theory defines a more specific goal within that framework: public authority is to pursue the peace of *tranquillitas ordinis*, the peace of "right order," among nations. As Pope John Paul II reminded the world this past January 1 in his message for the thirtieth World Day of Peace, the Catholic Church has been in possession of this worldly concept of peace for more than fifteen hundred years, since St. Augustine. The Catholic Church does not teach the possibility of a world without conflict, a utopian fantasy that ill fits biblical religion. The Catholic Church does teach the possibility of *tranquillitas ordinis*, the peace of order, which (in contemporary terms) means that legal and political processes are the primary instruments for resolving conflict. That is the "order" that right-minded governments are to defend and advance in the contemporary world.

It is, admittedly, a humble sort of peace. It can coexist with bruised spirits, broken hearts, and ill will. It is a peace in which swords remain—sheathed or used to defend order—but are not yet beaten into plowshares. It has, however, one great advantage for moral realists, Catholic and otherwise: it is a peace that can be achieved in this world, in and among nations.

To defend and advance *tranquillitas ordinis* is a moral obligation. It is not an option. The obligation to contribute to the defense of order in international public life does not fall equally on every state, though. It is not American exceptionalism, but simple common sense, to recognize that the United States today carries a greater responsibility for order in international politics than, say, Italy or Great Britain. In the tradition of

moral reflection that begins with *The City of God*, what the Catholic tradition requires of a great power like the United States is neither passivity nor pacifism in the face of international aggression, but the exercise of moral reason. If armed force is used to repel or deter aggression, the tradition requires that this be a use of force ordered to a legitimate *public* end: it is, in the Latin, *bellum* rather than *duellum*, a war and not a duel (a use of armed force for private ends, undertaken by private persons). As James Turner Johnson has recently argued, this was the crux of the issue for Augustine: the public versus private use of armed force. The new Catholic “default position” seems unable to grasp this distinction, thus depriving *bellum* of its distinctive moral texture by virtually equating it with *duellum*.

The “default position” also typically confuses the two clusters of criteria in the classic just war tradition. In practice, it affords an absolute priority to the *in bello* questions of proportionality and discrimination (non-combatant immunity), while paying insufficient attention to what have hitherto been assumed to be the morally prior *ad bellum* questions: just cause, right intention, legitimate authority, and so forth. (Prof. Griffiths, I should note, is something of an exception in not focusing on *in bello* considerations.) Indeed, more than a few Catholic leaders and commentators, operating within what they imagine to be a new, improved just war tradition, were so single-mindedly focused on noncombatant immunity prior to the war against the Taliban and al-Qaeda that the question of the moral *necessity* of a vigorous response to the Taliban/al-Qaeda nexus, in defense of the United States and of world order, seemed to drop out of the picture. Responsible public officials who were in fact exercising great restraint were being regularly dunned with warnings about the dangers of noncombatant casualties, as if the question of public authority’s obligation to defend both its citizens and a minimum of order in international public life were a secondary or tertiary moral issue.

Like the dubious “presumption against violence,” the disproportionate stress put on *in bello* issues by the new Catholic “default position” turns the tradition inside out, treating armed force as a kind of independent variable in world politics. In doing so, however, it uncouples just war thinking from statecraft. This is a serious problem, for the classic Catholic just war tradition is a tradition of statecraft, one that seeks to defend and advance the prospects of the peace of order that can be built in this world on the foundations of justice and freedom. In the pursuit of those ends, the classic tradition both allows and restrains the statesman’s use of armed force.

There are two further problems with this absolutizing of *in bello* questions: it is theologically inappropriate, and it leads to distorted readings of political reality.

The new “default position” is theologically inappropriate because it puts the burden of moral analysis on what are inevitably prudential judgments. Here, “epistemic modesty” is required by the very nature of the case, since judgments about “proportional” and “discriminate” military means inevitably lead us into a wilderness of contingencies where moral clarity is not easy to find, especially before the fact. We can have a reasonable measure of confidence in our moral judgments about such *ad bellum* questions issues as just cause, right intention, and legitimate authority, for these judgments do not depend so heavily on empirical contingencies. No such confidence can possibly attend our prior-to-fact judgments about the number of non-combatant casualties likely in most military engagements. That is one reason why the classic Catholic just war tradition gave priority to the *ad bellum* questions. They are logically first, because they are the questions directly relating to the primary moral obligations of public authority, but they are also the questions on which a measure of moral clarity is more likely.

As for distorting the lens of empirical judgment, the new Catholic “default position” has yet to learn the lesson of the last decade of the Cold War. “The Challenge of Peace” was deeply influenced by the emphasis laid on questions of proportionality and discrimination because of the threat of nuclear war. When that emphasis drove the moral analysis, as it did in “The Challenge of Peace,” the result was a distorted picture of reality and a set of moral judgments that contributed little to wise statecraft. Rather than recognizing that nuclear weapons were one (extremely dangerous) manifestation of a prior conflict with profound moral roots, the bishops’ pastoral letter seemed to suggest that nuclear weapons could be factored out of the conflict between the West and Soviet communism by arms control. And in order to achieve arms control agreements with an irascible, nervous foe like the Soviet Union, it might be necessary to downplay the moral and ideological (read: human rights) dimensions of the Cold War. That, at least, was the real-world political implication of the claim that the greatest threat to peace (identified as such because *in bello* considerations trumped everything else) was the mere possession of nuclear weapons.

The opposite, of course, turned out to be true. Nuclear weapons were not the primary threat to peace; communism was. When communism went, so did the threat posed by the weapons. As the human rights resistance in Central and Eastern Europe brought massive regime change inside the Warsaw Pact, creating dynamics that eventually led to the demise of the Soviet Union, the risks of nuclear war were greatly diminished and real disarmament (not just arms “control”) began. To put it gently, the Catholic “default position” was off base by a country mile here.

I cannot speak for others, but the judgments that I have reached over the past few months about the war against international terrorism have been shaped by the classic Catholic distinction between *duellum* and *bellum*, between the use of armed force for private ends and a justifiable use of proportionate and discriminate armed force for public goods. My *ad bellum* analysis has run like this: The defense of the very possibility of order in world politics, and the defense of the United States against further terrorist aggression, are just causes. The United States government is a legitimate guardian of the public good; moreover, the U.S. has a major responsibility in advancing the just cause of eradicating the international terror networks, for the United Nations as presently constituted is incapable of dealing with large-scale security issues, and one somehow doubts that a return to the days of bounty hunters as a means for dealing with al-Qaeda and similar organizations would constitute much of an advance for *tranquillitas ordinis*.

President Bush has said that our primary goals in going to war against international terrorism are not vengeance or revenge but the defense of our people and of the very possibility of order in world politics; our actions since September 2001 have demonstrated empirically the truth of the President's definition of intention. No serious student of contemporary international terrorism thinks that negotiation would assuage or dissuade people prepared to commit mass murder and deem it a religious and moral good; the use of armed force against the de facto aggression that is the international terror network is a necessary remedy, and thus satisfies the *ad bellum* criterion of "last resort." Is there a reasonable chance of success? We cannot know for certain. What we can know—based on the hard experience of inept, ineffective, and morally dubious responses to terrorist attacks on U.S. personnel and property during the previous administration—is that a failure to act forcefully and precisely encourages terrorists to do even worse next time. Has our military action been proportionate and discriminate? One somehow doubts that there would have been dancing in the streets of Kabul had the war been conducted, as Prof. Griffiths suggests, against "the people of Afghanistan." Were I a betting man, I would risk a wager on a similar, perhaps even more joyful, response in Baghdad if the Saddam Hussein regime is toppled as a result of the war against international terrorism.

Then there is Prof. Griffiths' suggestion that lay Catholics lack the information necessary to make a serious contribution to a national debate about the moral legitimacy of the use of armed force in defense of peace, justice, and freedom. I rather doubt that the American

Catholic laity are as bewitched by alleged governmental mendacity and media jingoism (itself a counterintuitive notion) as Prof. Griffiths suggests. In any case, his proposal hardly squares with the Second Vatican Council's stress on the particular responsibility of the laity to shape the public moral argument over public issues of great consequence. It is also at odds with the classic Catholic understanding that, while teaching the appropriate moral principles is the responsibility of the bishops, the laity have the responsibility to make precisely the kinds of moral judgments Prof. Griffiths suggests are beyond their capacity to make. Further, the practical result of Prof. Griffiths' demand for a kind of radical epistemic clarity before reasonable *ad bellum* judgments are made seems obvious and inevitable: a retreat into a Catholic bunker.

Finally, a word about the Pope's role in these matters, which has been hotly debated (and sometimes misrepresented) since the Gulf War. Popes play many different roles in international affairs. As supreme pastor of the Church, all popes must teach the moral principles that should guide statecraft. As a great international defender of human rights, Pope John Paul II has condemned the slaughter of innocents and the practice of terrorism. As a world religious leader, John Paul has insisted that religious convictions provide no justification for terrorism and has rallied other religious leaders to similar statements; at the same time, he has tried to keep open a space in which religious difference is not absolutized into religious conflict. As the head of the Holy See, the Pope has put the Church's diplomacy at the service of peace, understood as a work of justice and freedom. As the Bishop of Rome, charged with the special Petrine *sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarum*, the "care of all the Churches," John Paul must do what he can to protect embattled and persecuted minority Christian communities in the Islamic world.

When the Pope prays for peace, when the Pope pleads for peace, he is not taking a pacifist position, as some have claimed. Those committed to the just war tradition are committed to it precisely because they are for peace. The difference between pacifism and the just war tradition is that the latter recognizes that there are circumstances in which the use of proportionate and discriminate armed force is a moral obligation in pursuit of peace. That is a difference the new Catholic "default position" blurs, and that is yet another reason why it is dubiously Catholic.

GEORGE WEIGEL is Senior Fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center and author of *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II*.

Books In Review

The Jesuit Enigma

PASSIONATE UNCERTAINTY: INSIDE THE AMERICAN JESUITS. By PETER McDONOUGH and EUGENE C. BIANCHI. *University of California Press.* 380 pp. \$29.95.

Reviewed by Avery Cardinal Dulles

AT A PRESS CONFERENCE one day last summer, a newspaper correspondent asked me how I could combine being a Jesuit with being a cardinal. I at first imagined that she might be alluding to the fact that as a cardinal I might have to compromise on my vows of poverty and obedience to my Jesuit superiors, but then the true meaning of her question became clear. She explained that cardinals are supposed to support the teaching of the Pope, while Jesuits belong to the intellectual opposition, secretly if not publicly contesting the official doctrine of the Church. Are they not cleverer and wiser than the hierarchical Church, the subversive vanguard of the future Church?

I replied that she had been guided by the chauvinist myth about the Society of Jesus, but not by the reality. The Jesuit order, I explained, has been from its origins at the service and disposal of the papacy. With its headquarters in Rome, it has a long and distinguished record of collaborating with the Holy See and of rendering assistance in the preparation of papal and conciliar documents. There have been Jesuit cardinals since the sixteenth century. The present number, eight, represents an all-time high. The idea of the Jesuits as pioneers of

an alternative church has done great harm both to the Society and to the Church.

Many of the works of the Jesuit order are prospering. Its universities in the United States have larger enrollments and more academic prestige than ever before, Jesuit high schools are attracting large numbers of excellent students, and some Jesuit publications and parishes are very successful. The quality of young men joining the Society is as high as ever, but the number of new recruits is dramatically down, and the decline is bound to have a negative impact on traditionally Jesuit apostolates.

Many blame the dominant "consumerist" culture for the downturn in vocations, which has in fact affected most religious orders and diocesan churches in Europe, North America, and Australia. But some religious orders, even in the United States, are increasing rapidly, and some dioceses are attracting large numbers of seminarians. The vocations seem to be there, but the Jesuits, at the moment, are getting too few of them. Decisive action on the part of superiors is needed to reverse this trend. The higher administrators, for the most part, are competent managers. While they keep the machinery going rather smoothly, they seem unwilling or unable to correct obvious defects and to project an unambiguous vision of what the Society of Jesus is about.

If a wake-up call is needed, we have it in *Passionate Uncertainty: Inside the American Jesuits*, a new book by Peter McDonough and Eugene C. Bianchi. It contains an abundance of useful information, even though it is in many respects a flawed study. Decked out with all the paraphernalia of scientific sociology, the research is heavily slanted, partly because the authors worked with a definite *parti pris*. McDonough, a trained sociologist, is the author of *Men Astutely Trained*, a long book describing the difficulties of American Jesuits as they make the transition "from a rule-governed hier-

archy to a role-driven network." Eugene Bianchi, a former Jesuit priest, has long been a militant proponent of "democratic reform" in the Church—a rubric under which he includes the opening of priesthood to married men and to women and the abandonment of the Church's code of sexual ethics.

THE THESIS OF THE BOOK may be summarized roughly as follows. The Society of Jesus is caught in a bind. The hierarchical Church is a rigid institution striving in vain to bring the behavior and ideas of its members into line with traditional orthodoxy. Especially under the "restorationist" regime of Pope John Paul II the Church has stubbornly rejected the democratic reforms that are needed. The bishops are impotent creatures of the Vatican. Jesuits, for the most part, are to be praised for deploring the repressive structures but at the same time pitied for their inability to change the situation. As a religious order, the Society is bound to preserve at least the appearance of conformity. Even among Jesuits, therefore, dissent has for the most part gone underground.

The competitive professionalization of higher education, the authors believe, only adds to the difficulty. It deprives Jesuits of any privileged position in the academic world. Their identity as priests and as religious does nothing to advance them in their own institutions. Conversely, their professional career fails to support their priestly and Jesuit identity. Jesuits are therefore helpless victims of a dysfunctional Church and a secularized educational system.

This thesis, while it clearly dominates the book, is for the most part unstated. Only in the Epilogue does it surface in explicit form. But it influences the data and their interpretation. The method of the book is to present the results of hundreds of questionnaires, essays, and interviews that the authors solicited from

AVERY CARDINAL DULLES, S.J., holds the Lawrence J. McGinley Chair in Religion and Society at Fordham University.

present and former Jesuits. Former Jesuits were important for the authors' purposes because they were found to be less conservative than Jesuits themselves.

The results are skewed because many Jesuits, suspecting the authors' bias, refused to answer the questionnaires. "Close to 30 percent," we are told, responded. The authors "relied as much on personal contacts and recommendations as on random drawings." They asked friends to suggest persons who might be interested in taking part in the survey. Those who wrote at length were often the ones most interested in supporting the authors' foregone conclusions. The "silent majority," who go about their day-to-day business in the universities, schools, and parishes, are vastly underrepresented. But some diversity of opinion shows up because the authors made it a principle "to give the bad guys some of the good lines."

FOR MY PART, I can say that I recognize among Jesuits, as among other priests and religious in the United States, the various trends reported in this survey.

The opinions of traditionalists, moderates, liberals, and radical reformers are dutifully recorded—even to the point of tedium. Some distinctions are made between older and younger Jesuits. But little light is thrown on the inner dynamics of recent decades, which have affected not only Jesuits but other religious orders, diocesan clergy, and laity.

The distinction, I believe, is not between older and younger Jesuits—the categories most often used by the authors—but rather between those whose attitudes were shaped by the ideological revolutions of the 1960s and the rest of the Society. For the most part, the Jesuits who had completed their formation before Vatican II have remained faithful to their previous vision of the Church and the Society, and were able to integrate Vatican II into that vision. But then came a group who belonged to the restless "baby-boom" generation. Like many of their contemporaries, they became wildly optimistic about secularization in the early 1960s, and then in the early 1970s deeply involved in protests against the Vietnam War and in fighting for various

social causes. They interpreted Vatican II as a kind of "palace revolution" in which the bishops put limits on the papacy, decentralized the Church, and transferred to the laity many powers formerly reserved to priests. The Council, some believe, renounced the high claims previously made for the Church and put Catholic Christianity on a plane of equality with other churches and religions. It also ostensibly embraced the modern world and the process of secularization.

Armed with their "progressive" reading of Vatican II, American Jesuits of this transitional generation became more committed to the struggle for social reform than to the propagation of Christian faith. They saw little but evil in pre-conciliar Catholicism. Drifting from historical consciousness into historical relativism, some of this generation questioned the current validity of the accepted creeds and dogmas of the Church. At the present moment members of this intermediate age group hold positions of greatest power and influence in the Society, but they no longer represent the cutting edge. A younger group is arising, much more committed to the Church and its traditions.

In spite of their grim view of the Jesuit situation, the authors report that the morale of Jesuits in all age groups is relatively high. Jesuits see themselves as companions of Jesus, engaged in a mission they share with fellow members of their communities and with colleagues all over the world. They are sustained by an inner life of prayer and by the vision of Christ and his Kingdom set forth in the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius. Although they may suffer from the lack of intimate companionship that could be offered by married life, they are as a group more satisfied in their work than men who have left the Society.

A few Jesuits in their fifties and sixties believe that the Church "as we know it" is destined soon to collapse. This group tends to be critical of Pope

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John Paul II and his alleged attempts to silence dissent. Some express perplexity about the sacerdotal aspects of the Jesuit calling. Especially in the theological schools, which have a large enrollment of women students, Jesuit faculty members are reluctant to bring up the topic of priestly ordination. Some formation directors seem to have been infected with a critical attitude toward hierarchy and priesthood. One is quoted as saying:

I see the hierarchical Church's direction today as different from but not antithetical to that of the Society. The hierarchical Church is often concerned with orthodoxy, clerical advancement, maintenance of church power, univocal thinking, and being right. I think these concerns hurt the whole Church.

Ignatius might indeed want to restrain the craving for clerical advancement, but he could hardly be imagined making light of orthodoxy. He would have swiftly removed any formation director who showed hostility to the "hierarchical Church."

A NEW GENERATION of seminarians and religious is arising, not only in the Jesuits but in the nation at large. This generation is not interested in denigrating the past or in liberating itself from the shackles of orthodoxy. On the contrary, it consists of young men eager to retrieve the tradition of former centuries and to serve the hierarchical Church as it exists today. This generation receives little recognition in the McDonough-Bianchi study, but some indications are nevertheless given.

The testimonies of Jesuits under forty are encouraging. A thirty-seven-year-old Jesuit says, for instance, that "our order, by its very constitution, cannot ever separate itself from the Catholic Church." It must always be in union with Rome. We cannot be a "church within the Church" or an

"alternative church." A thirty-six-year-old theology student has this to say: "I entered to help support the direction that Pope John Paul II has given the Church. The Society has a mixed response to this direction, and the confusion it causes will ultimately hurt the effectiveness of the Society."

In the same vein a thirty-year-old student of theology is quoted as saying, very perceptively: "If the stance of the Society is widely perceived as anti-institutional hierarchy, anti-Vatican, anti-pope, and if political and politically correct norms are used to select candidates for the Society, most of those who wish to serve Christ's Church will go elsewhere." On reflection it should be evident that it makes little sense to take vows and seek ordination in a religious order unless one is committed to support and serve the hierarchical Church.

Besides the cancer of opposition to hierarchical authority, another disease that needs to be cured is the ambivalence about priesthood. A thirty-one-year-old Jesuit complains: "In the two theologates that I attended . . . I didn't find anyone providing a cogent explanation of ordained ministry and its relation to lay ministry." Still another, aged thirty-five and already ordained, writes:

I find much of our energy is spent in fighting the battles of the immediate fallout of Vatican II (battles which have left deep scars on many professors but which are not the pressing issues for Jesuits of my generation) or preparing for life in an idealized, politically correct church that does not exist now and is not likely to exist in my lifetime.

Tellingly, the word "priesthood" is rarely mentioned in our classes. In fact, this year when the third-year theologians . . . gathered in Boston, most men from all three centers

reported that they had spent the last two years either ignoring or apologizing for the fact that they were preparing for ordination. Such is life in the ideologically insulated and trendy city-states on the self-proclaimed cutting edge of theology.

The authors of *Passionate Uncertainty* themselves recognize that "the gravest problem is almost certainly disarray over the role of the priesthood as it pertains to ministry. This is particularly worrisome for an activist, apostolic order." Worry as they may, McDonough and Bianchi do not help to solve the problem.

In addition to the difficulties of some Jesuits with hierarchy and priesthood, a third problem is prominent. Jesuits are conscious of a dis-



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For all that, St. Ignatius cannot be accused of rigidity. In the selection of styles of spirituality and ministry, he allows great freedom for individuals to discern what is for the greater glory of God. He requires superiors to listen carefully to their subjects before assigning them to specific duties. Presupposing men who are thoroughly trained in the traditions of the Church and completely loyal to the hierarchy, Ignatius wants Jesuits on the spot to make necessary adaptations rather than simply to go by the book. He expects them to perform a

priestly service while immersing themselves fully in the world and its problems.

THE SOCIETY OF JESUS has an exciting history because its members have been bold and imaginative in their tactics. The guiding norm of "the greater glory of God" has aroused in the Society a constant restlessness and a passionate desire to take on new and difficult tasks. In that sense, Jesuits can quite properly experience "passionate uncertainty." Their uncertainty is not about the truth of the Catholic faith or the authority of ecclesiastical superiors but about what God is asking of the Society and each of its members today. What new Indies are waiting to be conquered? What new fields are ripe for the harvest? What more can I as an individual do for Christ? The Ignatian "Rules for the Discernment of Spirits" have never lost their relevance, and never will.

Because of the undying imprint that St. Ignatius has made upon his order, and the appeal that his personality holds for Jesuits today, the Society of Jesus has extraordinary resources for its own self-renewal. In their enthusiasm to pursue what they think God is calling them to do, Jesuits sometimes err on one side or another—whether it be papalism or laicism, sacralism or secularism, traditionalism or modernism—but they are capable of recovering their balance. Some other orders may be more stable, but for some of us, at least, life in the Jesuits is more challenging and more congenial. There is something special about an order that is always prepared to take risks in the hope of accomplishing greater things for Christ and his Kingdom. The Jesuit enigma never ceases to fascinate and to attract. The particular spirit and style that St. Ignatius bequeathed to his order was never more needed than it is in the rapidly changing and polymorphic world of our day.

Jump-Starting the Enlightenment

RADICAL ENLIGHTENMENT: PHILOSOPHY AND THE MAKING OF MODERNITY 1650-1750. By JONATHAN I. ISRAEL. Oxford University Press. 810 pp. \$45.

Reviewed by Edward T. Oakes

ENLIGHTENMENT-BASHING, it would seem, is "in." If anything could unite the discordant voices inside the cacophony of postmodern "discourse," it must surely be the almost unanimously acknowledged thesis that the Enlightenment project has exhausted itself. What earlier intellectual historians had so smugly called the "triumph of reason" over obscurantist dogma is now looked on as in reality an imperious (and imperial) Will to Power. Reason's claim to universality is now regarded as just a cover for Europe's colonial outreach, the velvet glove of reasonability cloak-

ing the iron fist of its aggressive, hegemonic domination of the rest of the globe. That old shibboleth "the White Man's Burden" has now taken on a new meaning. What once was seen as a burden of *responsibility*, set on the shoulders of European man to bring the "light of reason" to other cultures (which cultures must of course by definition be regarded as more benighted), is now seen as a burden of *oppression*, one that imposes a totalizing and obliterating reason on the kaleidoscopic variety of other cultures.

Even the term "Enlightenment" has come under scrutiny. Not only is it intolerably self-congratulatory and offensively denigrating to other ages and civilizations, but it also subtly blocks from view a motif common to all religions and philosophies: that reason's light is universal. Aristotle says in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that reason is "the divine in man," which could hardly imply that any one age has a monopoly on such an inherent light. In fact, as Josef Pieper points out in *The Concept of Sin*, "this metaphor, the 'light of reason,' seems to have made its home in every intellectual tradition of the human race."

EDWARD T. OAKES, S.J., teaches in the Religious Studies Department at Regis University in Denver, Colorado.

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So much so, he says, that “one might well wonder whether this image of the light of reason really is a metaphor at all, a mere illustrative expression.”

Common also to the wisdom tradition of religions and philosophies both East and West is the insistence that what blocks that light is not tradi-

tion, or religion, or worship, but sin. Offenses against reason always have the effect of “matting” the soul, which is why so many religions speak of sin, or crime, or violations of ritual norms, as a “stain” on the soul and why Thomas Aquinas, for one, can correlatively say: “But if man returns

to the light of reason and to the divine light by virtue of grace, then the stain is washed away” (*Summa Theologiae* 2.2.37.1). Thus religious rituals of confession, purification, penance, and so forth serve to wash away that stain and to restore that light to its pristine splendor. Nor can it be accidental that so many sects and religious or quasi-philosophic movements speak of themselves (or are called by others) the *Illuminati*, the *Alumbrados*, or address themselves to the Inner Light, etc. Nor should it be forgotten that when reason is taken to be an endowment common to all human beings, the West usually means by enlightenment the triumph of reason (over sin, tradition, obscurantism, whatever), whereas the East habitually uses the term enlightenment to mean the soul’s triumph over reason, as in the Buddha’s moment of enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree.

MOREOVER, THE SWEEPING term “Enlightenment,” if meant to cover all of European intellectual life from roughly 1600 to 1789, also obscures (ironically, given its name) the sheer variety of thought in that time. As Jonathan I. Israel admits in his massive study, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750*, the so-called Enlightenment can actually be divided into four main streams: Cartesian, Newtonian-Lockean, Leibnizian (a kind of synthesis of the previous two), and—the subject of Israel’s book—“Radical,” which in Israel’s taxonomy refers mainly to Spinoza as opposed to, say, Voltaire or Hume. Of course this broad categorization (which could easily be given greater nuance with further subdivisions) only proves the point first made by Judge John T. Noonan, Jr. in his book *The Lustre of Our Country*, a study of the notion of religious liberty of so-called “Enlightened” Founding Fathers of the Constitution of the United States, especially James Madison. As Noonan points out:



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"The Enlightenment," like its now discredited opposite, "the Dark Ages," is at best a way of dating a period of history. It does not function well as an analytic guide. A catchword and catchall, the term embraces every extoller of reason from Mr. Locke to M. Voltaire. The intellectual leaders of the age all celebrated reason—a reason that encompassed such a spectrum of religious convictions that the verbal convergence is not helpful in discerning the lines of division.

The real problem with Israel's focus on Spinoza is that if "radical" means the complete rejection of religion, tradition, faith, revelation, and hieratic authority, then a book of this title should concentrate on Hume or Voltaire—who together seem to have given the Enlightenment its deceptive retrospective meaning as a movement unambiguously hostile to religion. Certainly Israel is correct that the term "Spinozism" was often equivalent in the popular (and underground) press with "atheism." Yet the fact remains that, judging from Spinoza's own views, he must be counted as one of the most deeply religious philosophers of post-Cartesian Europe. To be sure, classical theists often accused, and still accuse, Spinoza's pantheism of being the functional equivalent of atheism, and perhaps the point should be granted. But that still leaves hanging a question that Israel never really addresses: namely, did the way Spinoza was received by intellectuals after his death correspond to the real man? As Don Garrett argues in his Introduction to the *Cambridge Companion to Spinoza*, the answer is far from obvious.

Benedict Spinoza appears to be a contradictory figure in the history of philosophy. From the beginning, he has been notorious as an "atheist" who seeks to

substitute Nature for a personal deity; yet he was also, in Novalis' famous description of him, "the God-intoxicated man." He was an uncompromising necessitarian and causal determinist, whose ethical ideal was to become a "free man." He main-

tained that the human mind and the human body are identical, yet he also insisted that the human mind can achieve a kind of eternity that transcends the death of the body. He has been adopted by Marxists as a precursor of historical materialism,

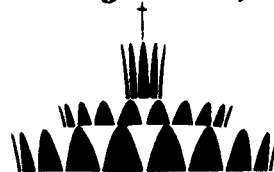
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and by Hegelians as a precursor of absolute idealism. He was a psychological egoist, proclaiming that all individuals necessarily seek their own advantage above all else and implying that other individuals were of value to himself only insofar as they were useful to him; yet his writings aimed to promote human community based on love and friends, he had many devoted friends, and even his critics were obliged to acknowledge that his personal conduct was above reproach. . . . He denied supernatural revelation, and criticized popular religion as a grave danger to the peace and stability of the state; yet he devoted himself to the careful interrogation of Scripture, and argued for complete toleration of freedom

of religion. Providing explicit definitions of his terms and formal demonstrations of his doctrines, he sought to clarify his meaning and reasons more diligently than has perhaps any other philosopher; yet few philosophers have proven more difficult to interpret.

By and large, Israel looks only at the first side of this Janus-faced philosopher, the synagogue excommunicate who so horrified his co-religionists and who, for similar reasons, gave such a delightful frisson to the novel-reading public in France (one of Israel's most fascinating chapters is devoted to "The Spinozistic Novel in France"). Nor can there be any question that the challenge Spinoza hurled at supernaturalists and his innovations in biblical hermeneutics

caused an immense upheaval in European thought, so much so that in comparison, Voltaire looks in Israel's narrative like the derivative and unoriginal epigone he in fact is.

Which is to say that, provided the reader keeps in mind the author's main focus on Spinoza's *historical* impact—as opposed to the actual man locatable in his own texts—one may judge that Israel has succeeded in his task. Not since the days of A. O. Lovejoy has America seen an intellectual historian of such energy and verve, a scholar with such an impressive command of his sources (not only does he give the impression of having visited nearly every library in Europe but also of having read each volume and manuscript *in them*).

But it is in the nature of the discipline that a historian of ideas must concentrate either on history or on

WHAT IS GOD? • WHAT IS TRUTH? • WHAT IS BEAUTY? • WHAT IS GOODNESS? • WHAT IS BEING? • WHAT IS MAN? • WHAT IS ANIMAL? • WHAT IS RATIONAL? • WHAT IS FREEWILL? • WHAT IS FREEDOM? • WHAT IS CHANCE? • WHAT IS JUSTICE? • WHAT IS HONOR? • WHAT IS VIRTUE? • WHAT IS COURAGE? • WHAT IS TEMPERANCE? • WHAT IS HUMILITY? • WHAT IS LOVE? • WHAT IS FRIENDSHIP? • WHAT IS LAW? • WHAT IS CULTURE? • WHAT IS LEISURE? • WHAT IS GOVERNMENT? • WHAT IS SOCIETY? • WHAT IS WAR? • WHAT IS PEACE? • WHAT IS NATURE? • WHAT IS MOTION? • WHAT IS CHANGE? • WHAT IS FORM? • WHAT IS MATTER? • WHAT IS TIME? • WHAT IS THOUGHT? • WHAT IS LOGIC? • WHAT IS CONSCIENCE? • WHAT IS HEALTH? • WHAT IS LIFE? • WHAT IS DEATH? • WHAT IS MATHEMATICS? • WHAT IS QUANTITY? • WHAT IS CURVATURE? • WHAT IS GEOMETRY? • WHAT IS CALCULUS? • WHAT IS ARITHMETIC? • WHAT IS SCIENCE? • WHAT IS GRAVITY? • WHAT IS FORCE? • WHAT IS LIGHT? • WHAT IS ELECTRICITY? • WHAT IS ART? • WHAT IS COMEDY? • WHAT IS TRAGEDY? • WHAT IS POETRY? • WHAT IS MUSIC? • WHAT IS GRAMMAR? • WHAT IS HIS- TORY? • WHAT IS ECONOMICS? • WHAT IS GRACE? • WHAT IS FAITH? • WHAT IS HOPE? • WHAT IS CHARITY? • WHAT IS WISDOM? • WHAT IS REVELATION? • WHAT IS TRADITION? • WHAT IS DOCTRINE? • WHAT IS HAPPINESS? • WHAT IS JOY? • WHAT IS SALVATION? • WHAT IS HEAVEN? • WHAT IS GOD?

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ideas. Historians of philosophy like Etienne Gilson and James Collins, while brilliant historians, generally wrote to engage their philosophical subjects in an ongoing debate from a particular philosophical perspective, in their cases, a Thomistic one. Israel's focus, however, is much more strictly historical, as evidenced by his detailed attention to some rather obscure thinkers and novelists of his chosen era, not to mention by the massive amount of documentation he marshals to build his case. Much like the government's antitrust suit against Microsoft, with box upon box of evidence entered into the record, Israel seems to think that where five citations would clinch his case, seventeen will do even better. And much like a legal brief, the book is published in extremely small print, with the footnotes even tinier.

BUT LET NOT THESE demurrals undercut the astonishing achievement of this fascinating work of historical detection. No one could finish this book and not be utterly stunned by the intellectual ferment, not to say outright turmoil, of the years from 1650 to 1750. In his famous book *Orthodoxy* (1907), G. K. Chesterton spoke of this almost freakishly unsettled discontent in the European mind, a ferment which he felt was its constituting essence:

The highest gratitude and respect are due to the great human civilizations such as the old Egyptian or the existing Chinese. Nevertheless it is no injustice [to these civilizations] to say that only modern Europe has exhibited incessantly this power of self-renewal, recurring often at the shortest intervals and descending to the smallest facts of building or costume. All other societies die finally and with dignity. We die daily. We are always being born again with almost indecent obstetrics.

These "smallest facts" apparently include novel-reading and library-cataloguing too; and in that area Israel has given us, it seems, *all* the details. Readers who have the time for it will find that in itself the book constitutes a graduate seminar in Enlightenment historiography (and takes about a semester to read). But because of the author's rather one-sided reading of Spinoza, the story he tells must be supplemented and counterbalanced by Judge Noonan's observation of the deep religiosity of the vast majority of "Enlightenment" thinkers. True to form, Israel repeats that hoary old cliché that philosophy had "assuredly [!] been marginal to the life of society since the advent of the Christian empire in late antiquity from the time of Constantine onwards," a complete distortion of the evidence that neither Collins nor Gilson would ever have dreamt of making. In fact, Chesterton's whole point was that

modern Europe's dynamism came from the volatile and unstable synthesis forged in the Middle Ages, which itself was due to some foreign, inassimilable element introduced at the Incarnation:

[Christianity] could be explained as an awful galvanic life working in what would have been a corpse. For our civilization *ought* to have died, by all parallels, by all sociological probability, in the . . . [twilight of the gods] of the end of Rome. That is the weird inspiration of our estate: you and I have no business to be here at all. We are all revenants; all living Christians are dead pagans walking about. Just as Europe was about to be gathered in silence to Assyria and Babylon, something entered into its body. And Europe has had a

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

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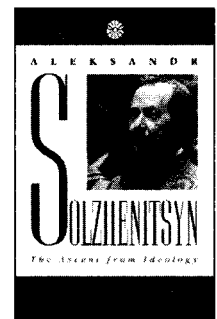
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strange life—it is not too much to say that it has had the jumps—ever since.

Viewed in this light, Jonathan Israel is an historian (indeed a brilliant one) of a century-long period filled with an inordinately large number of jumps. But his retrospective interpretation of Spinoza through the lens of his effects on later history leads Israel to forget what made European civilization so jumpy in the first place. After the death of Jesus, a sect of Jewish Messianists jump-started its way into the pagan empire of Rome; then this rabble of gentile lowlifes conquered that same empire before going on to master their masters, the Germanic tribes crossing the Rhine; and now after the demise of the age of European expansion—and the “Radical Enlightenment” notwithstanding—

we see the whole world a-jumping. Odd, how flush and ruddy-cheeked are the disciples of Swinburne’s “pale Galilean.”

The Relevance of Christopher Dawson

PROGRESS AND RELIGION. By CHRISTOPHER DAWSON. Introduction by MARY DOUGLAS. *Catholic University of America Press.* 198 pp. \$24.95.

Reviewed by Gerald J. Russello

NOT SO LONG AGO, before the dot-com bubble-burst and the September 11 terrorist attack, it seemed as if history would deliver all good things. The Dow was continuing its steady rise, and the nation seemingly faced no insurmountable problems. We were living at or near the end of history, with only a little tidying up to do at the rougher edges of the world before all would be permanently well. The events of last September compelled us to reconsider such rosy assumptions.

This pre-September 11 idyll was no anomaly. The belief in a perfect future has been a consistent feature of Western thought, emerging out of Christian hope of salvation in the next world. For the last two hundred years, however, this hope has been expressed usually in political or economic, rather than in religious, terms. This change has been so complete that the common presumption among elites, from the Davos World Economic Forum to the UN, is that this future path will entail the demise of religion. It is thus particularly appropriate that the Catholic Univer-

sity of America Press has reissued Christopher Dawson’s *Progress and Religion* (originally published in 1929) as part of a planned series of Dawson volumes. Long before Francis Fukuyama’s declaration of the end of history or Samuel Huntington’s clash of civilizations, Dawson (1889-1970) proposed a very different foundation for the study of human society. With *Progress and Religion* as well as such other books as *The Age of the Gods* (1928) and *The Making of Europe* (1932), Dawson unapologetically placed religion at the center of culture rather than on the periphery.

Dawson is one of those historians everyone should read but few actually do. It was not always so. In his lifetime, Arnold Toynbee and T. S. Eliot, among others, recognized his mastery of comparative history and religion and admired his crisp prose style. Almost alone in the 1920s and ’30s, he contended with those who denied religion any cultural significance. A young convert to Catholicism, Dawson was active for many years in ecumenical efforts in England. This experience had a clear impact on his awareness of cultural differences that is reflected in his sympathetic understanding of other cultures.

Progress and Religion is a direct attack on the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century social sciences and their understanding of progress. Now known as the “secularization thesis,” the theory of progress proposes that civilizational development is directly proportional to a decline in religious belief and influence. In three chapters, one each devoted to sociology, anthropology, and history, Dawson examines the thought of such figures as Condorcet, Comte, Frazer, and LePlay. Drawing on their work, the social sciences excluded religion, either through Cartesian rationalism, Spenglerian theories of civilizational life cycles, or supposed general laws of anthropological development. They uniformly neglected “the study of religion in its fundamen-

GERALD J. RUSSELLO, a lawyer in New York City, is the editor of *Christianity and European Culture: Selections from the Work of Christopher Dawson* (CUA Press, 1998). The book is unrelated to the new series of Dawson’s works.

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tal social aspects." In the view of such thinkers, religion was "essentially a negative force like ignorance or tyranny" and so could not be a creative cultural influence.

Dawson overturned this entire way of thinking about culture. In passionate, disciplined prose, he demonstrated that materialist or environmental explanations of religious belief simply did not accord with the evidence. "Modern writers on anthropology and primitive thought have tended to assume that religion is a secondary phenomenon and that man's earliest attitude to reality was a kind of empirical materialism." On the contrary, as he wrote in 1925, the "great civilizations of the world do not produce the great religions as a kind of cultural by-product; in a very real sense the great religions are the foundations on which the great civilizations rest." In her introduction to the new edition of the book, the distinguished anthropologist Mary Douglas notes that Dawson "artfully stages a dialogue between the eighteenth-century philosophers, Condorcet, Rousseau, Kant, and Hegel, and the people they thought of as primitive." Religious faith takes on a different perspective if examined from the point of view of these people themselves, and not through the prism of anthropological theory. "The thin rationalism [of modern anthropology], which proceeded by arbitrarily separating one level of experience from the next, grossly distorted the subject matter and made a mockery of its pretensions to objectivity." These thinkers largely ignored the brute fact that "an obscure and confused intuition of transcendent being" was present in and influenced both so-called primitive cultures and more advanced ones.

PROGRESS AND RELIGION shows, moreover, that "the religious factor has had a far more important share in the development of human cultures than that which has usually been ascribed

to it." Contrary to the assumptions of the progressive anthropologists, material and cultural progress need not go together. The early Christians in the Roman Empire, for example, created a more dynamic and vibrant culture than the dying, "higher" culture of the pagans. Likewise, Dawson notes peoples such as the Eskimo or

Bushmen, whom the theorists of progress considered completely dominated by their physical surroundings. In fact, these cultures are the results "of a free and intelligent activity, and it expresses itself in an art and a folklore far richer and more original than that of many more advanced peoples." Dawson was no cultural rela-



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tivist, but his analysis reveals that the secular scale of values simply does not capture the reality of human social life. The lesson he drew was that religious faith is the spark of culture, and external material success will not survive its being extinguished. That lesson is particularly important today,

when some continue to describe complex world cultures in simple, undifferentiated terms and understand them using the same imprecise Enlightenment concepts.

Recent anthropological scholarship has confirmed Dawson's thesis about the religious basis of culture

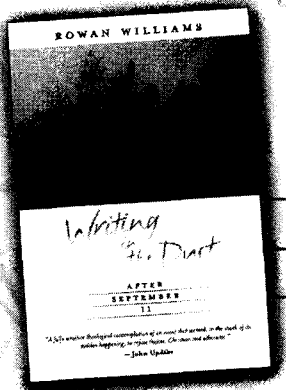
and cast serious doubt on the modern equation of progress with secularism. As such scholars as Rebecca French and David Hollinger have noted, religious ways of seeing the world remain the dominant interpretive tool for most people. Dawson anticipated this transition, insisting that progress "has begun to lose its hold on the mind of society . . . because the phase of civilization of which it was characteristic is already beginning to pass away." While a more positive assessment of religion's role has gained some ground, most of the academy and the wider circle of intellectuals and writers continue to ignore the formative role of religion, in the West and throughout the world.

Religion is a natural human impulse, and if it cannot be expressed in culture, it will find an outlet in ideology. In Dawson's time, the great temptations were the ideologies of fascism, communism, and Nazism. Today, our vulnerability is different. Elites in the West have become almost unable to understand religious motivations for conduct, even if the antiquated theory of progress no longer commands the scientific support it once did. This blindness has clear dangers not only with respect to our current efforts to understand Islam, but also in relation to other parts of the world, such as Tibet, and even in the United States itself, where the "culture wars" are largely motivated by a latent progressivism. The recent flare-up about evangelicals being "uneducated and easy to lead," not to mention the efforts to explain away certain strains of Islam as motivated by economic or other nonreligious factors, are recurring echoes of the problem Dawson originally diagnosed. Despite its claim to universality, the secularization thesis, no less than the "end of history" schema, contributes little to our understanding of the place of religion in the world today.

ROWAN WILLIAMS

Writing in the Dust

AFTER
SEPTEMBER
11



On the morning of September 11, 2001, Rowan Williams, distinguished theologian and Anglican Archbishop of Wales, was preparing to record a program on spirituality for Trinity Church, Wall Street — just two blocks from the World Trade Center — when the awful events of that day began to unfold. In this small, poignant volume, Williams reflects on the meaning of that horrific day and attempts to discern "how faith might begin to think and feel its way through the nightmare."

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AMERICA, WHICH DAWSON did not visit until the late 1950s when he was appointed to the first Stillman Chair in Roman Catholic Studies at Harvard, initially seemed to be his worst-case scenario. The nation regarded itself as the culmination of the project of human freedom, where old loyalties were cast aside in favor of the *novus ordo seclorum*, and where self-invention was part of the national character. In the 1920s and '30s, Dawson thought that America could not resist becoming "a purely secular type of culture which subordinates the whole of life to practical and economic ends and leaves no room for independent spiritual activity." In *Progress and Religion*, American civilization was the embodiment of technology gone awry: life acquired meaning only through consumption and production, by "more cinemas, motor-cars for all, wireless installations, more elaborate methods of killing people, purchase on the hire system, preserved foods, and picture papers." (One can only wonder what Dawson would have made of the Internet.)

However, in an important lecture on "America and the Secularization of Modern Culture," presented in the same year that John Courtney Murray's *We Hold These Truths* was published (1960), Dawson set forth a more hopeful view. America's origins in the dissenting and pluralist tradition of Protestantism had established a realm of personal and communal freedom outside the power of the state. The nation's individualism clearly bore the imprint of the Christian focus on the sacredness of the person, despite occasional lapses into narcissism. Just as importantly, American culture had developed without the anticlericalism or antireligious character that was common among its European counterparts. Further, America had a clear, if legally unrecognized, role for religion in public life. While Dawson foresaw that the sometimes stark separation of the

world of business and politics from that of religious belief threatened to produce what has been called a naked public square, he nevertheless thought that because the nation combined a deep religiosity with enormous material wealth and productivity, there "is great opportunity in America that may never be repeated."

Because of this heritage, Americans are able to understand religious belief. More importantly, at its best the nation can be a model of how to interpret modern political forms through the eyes of faith. The ability to hold strong religious convictions and to profess democratic principles is America's great contribution to the world, despite elite opinion about the "separation of church and state" on the one hand or a restricted "Christian America" on the other. This comfort with the modern mix of religion and politics may be of even greater importance in the coming century.

Defining Jewish Orthodoxy

LOVE AND TERROR IN THE GOD ENCOUNTER: THE THEOLOGICAL LEGACY OF RABBI JOSEPH B. SOLOVEITCHIK. By DAVID HARTMAN. *Jewish Lights*. 256 pp. \$25.

Reviewed by Eliyahu E. Stern

IN RECENT YEARS, sociologists, historians, and cultural theorists have documented the struggle over the identity of American Orthodox Judaism. Specifically, they have concentrated on the faction that refers to itself as "Modern Orthodoxy." Modern Orthodoxy has argued that a Jew can simultaneously be a committed religious person and be engaged in American culture, politics, and aca-

ELIYAHU E. STERN is a rabbinical student at Yeshiva University in New York City.

demie life. Since the death of its intellectual and spiritual leader, Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik (1903-1993), the Modern Orthodox world has been divided over the value and religious permissibility of advocating such a position. Modern Orthodox elites are now asking whether Modern Orthodoxy should remain a bridge for religious observance in the American public sphere, or, in the face of what some see as an increasingly hostile American society, retreat into the separatist mentality indicative of the more insular *Haredi* (fervently Orthodox) world. This debate can be seen most clearly in the fight over the identity and theological legacy of Rabbi Soloveitchik.

Born into an illustrious Lithuanian rabbinic family, Soloveitchik distinguished himself early on as a gifted student of Talmud. However, what



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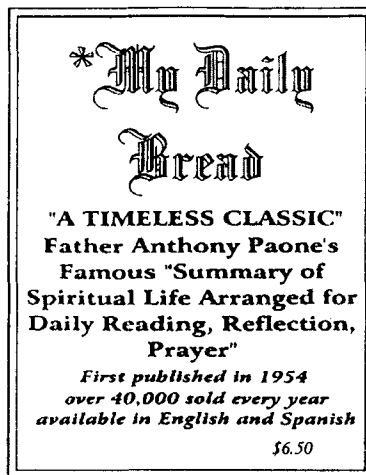
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separated him from the rest of his peers was that he coupled his rabbinic studies with a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Berlin. For many, even to some in his own family, such a mixture was considered heresy.

In the early 1930s, Soloveitchik came to the United States to be a rabbi in the Boston Jewish community, and by the 1940s he was teaching at Yeshiva University. As both a University Professor and Talmud teacher, Soloveitchik was forced to speak with and engage diverse types of students with different needs and interests. Because he was fluent in traditional Jewish religious discourse, he conversed with and influenced students and colleagues with more fundamentalist leanings. In speaking multiple languages to diverse audiences, Soloveitchik sowed the seeds for an all-consuming debate over his legacy and its role in defining the future of American Modern Orthodoxy.

For almost all of Soloveitchik's students, the debate over his legacy and the future direction of Modern Orthodoxy revolves around public policy or halakhic (Jewish legal) issues. Modern Orthodox elites have looked to Soloveitchik's essays for answers in their attempt to struggle with issues such as feminism, pluralism, and Israeli territorial concessions. Ironically, however, his writings very rarely, if ever, dealt with these issues. Rather, they were theologically oriented.

In his book *Love and Terror in the God Encounter: The Theological Legacy of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik*, Rabbi David Hartman, a student of Soloveitchik and the founder of the Jerusalem-based Shalom Hartman Institute, attempts to offer a picture of Soloveitchik's theological vision. In part one of what is planned to be a two-volume work, Hartman emphasizes that Soloveitchik's religious significance "cannot be measured by his rulings on contemporary halakhic . . . issues." Rather, "R. Soloveitchik's . . .

religious phenomenology must be given serious weight in any evaluation of his stance on the relationship between the Judaic tradition and modernity." In changing the debate from the halakhic positions Soloveitchik promoted to the vision of Judaism he embodied, Hartman forces the Modern Orthodox world to confront Soloveitchik as a theologian.

Hartman's work must be read as a cultural critique of those, such as Rabbi Moshe Meiselman, who wish to cast Soloveitchik in the mold of a typical isolated *Haredi* rabbinic figure. At the same time, Hartman's book is important in terms of its ability to explicate Soloveitchik's theological insights. Because many see Soloveitchik's words as, philosophically speaking, nothing more than wise homilies, one may be tempted to question the philosophic weight Hartman grants to Soloveitchik. However, such a reading of Soloveitchik betrays a lack of understanding of him as a cultural icon. Soloveitchik's ideas were not so much groundbreaking as they were meaningful to a community living the tension between the values of modernity and those of the Jewish tradition. In analyzing his writings, Hartman is not so much presenting new philosophic ideas as helping us to understand the complex words of a powerful religious figure whose intellectual legacy carries with it great social significance.

THESE MESSAGES AND themes are clearest in Hartman's reading of Soloveitchik's seminal work, *Halakhic Man*. Written in the 1940s (though not translated into English until 1983), the book offered students of religion a phenomenological analysis of Jewish law and its ability to serve as a mode of religious expression. In his introduction to the essay, Soloveitchik sketches the philosophic underpinnings of the Jewish legal system. His employment of modern philosophic, scientific, and theological sources to explain the particularity of Jewish law imparted a rigor and structure to the Jewish legal system never before seen. Soloveitchik's halakhic man sees all of nature and being through the prism of specific legal Jewish categories. These categories are arrived at only after in-depth study of rabbinic texts.

Before the book's publication, American Jewish circles were familiar with the concept of worshiping God through the heart or through action, but few had encountered or understood a notion of divine worship rooted in study. At the same time, as much of a shock as *Halakhic Man* was to more general audiences, few in the Orthodox world ever thought a Christian theologian such as Kierkegaard could be used—as he was by Soloveitchik—to explain the workings of their ancient legal tradition.

CORRECTION

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Professor Cassidy's e-mail address was listed incorrectly in
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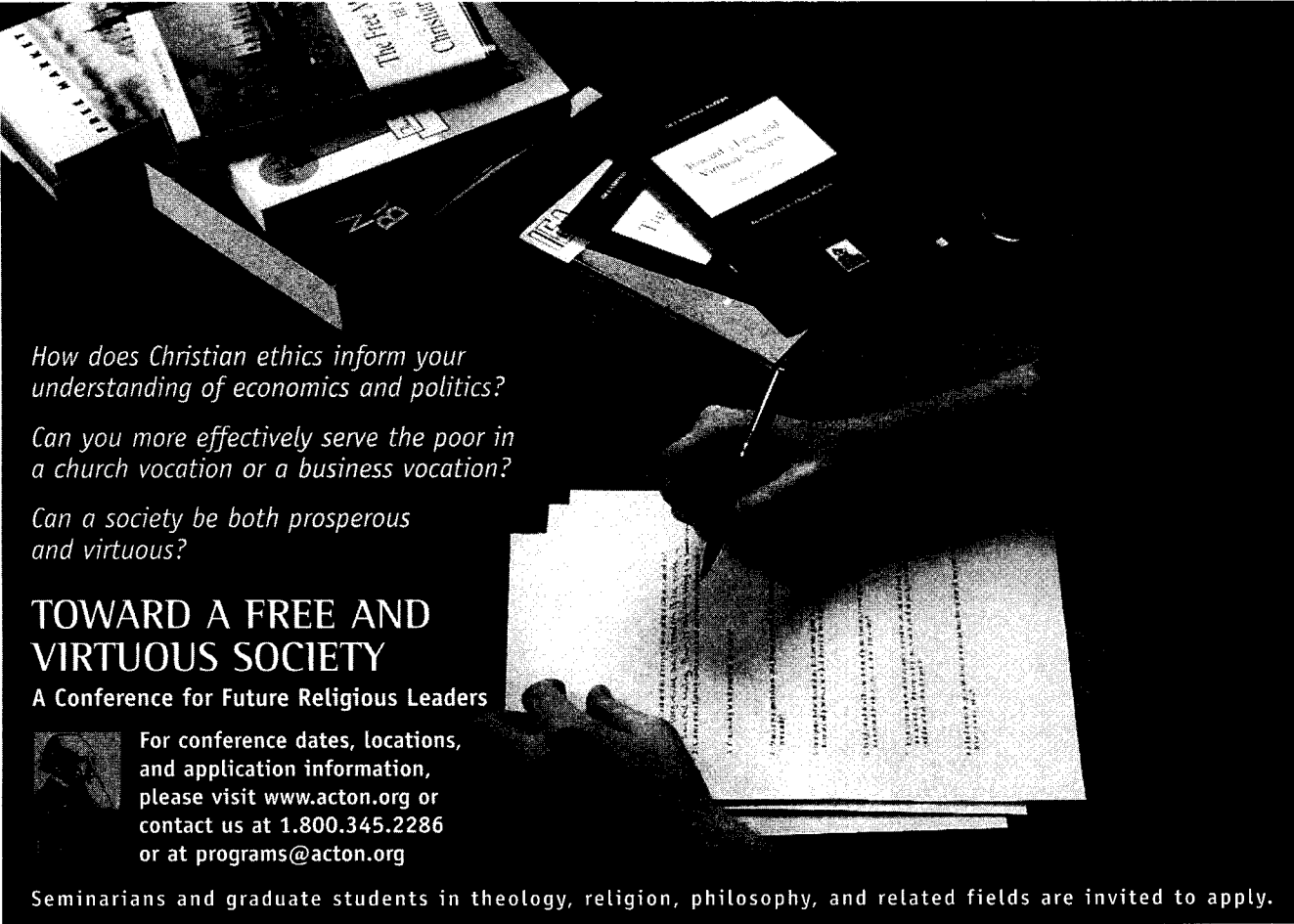
In a chapter entitled "Halakhic Hero," Hartman takes issue with those "revisionists" who, he claims, see Soloveitchik's use of philosophical terminology merely as an apology and a sophisticated cover-up for his strict traditionalism. For example, in *Halakhic Man*, Soloveitchik compares halakha to the discipline of mathematics. By this, he means that the same rules, logic, and exactitude that enter into mathematics can be seen in the halakhic system. Hartman claims: "Halakhic man's . . . primary concern [like the mathematician's] is to create a coherent conceptual framework that encompasses the halakhic data and not necessarily to apply his intellect to practical affairs." Specifically, Hartman denies that this comparison was intended as an apologetic attempt to justify the epistemology of halakha to a Western world that

admires the objectivity of mathematics. Instead, for Hartman, Soloveitchik's use of philosophic concepts and his comparison between halakha and mathematics was a means for him to highlight theoretical, creative inquiry in a system that was seen by most people as at once rigid and pragmatic.

In Hartman's view, Soloveitchik's comparison between halakha and mathematics allowed him to propose "an antidote to the dangers posed by modern existentialists, who claimed that subjective passion is the hallmark of religious authenticity." The demands that a set system such as halakha place on the individual prevent one from becoming overly infatuated with the self. At the same time, Hartman claims Soloveitchik could not help but hear contemporary liberal America asking him if "this seemingly stale and inflexible system leaves

any room for difference, creativity, and ingenuity." According to Hartman, Soloveitchik's concept of halakhic man is highly original in that it brings the individual back into a process that many see as robotic and mechanical. The intellectual creativity, spontaneity, and freedom promoted by Jewish study challenges the individual to be innovative and original in his thinking. For Hartman, halakhic man's ability to breed individuality through study is proof of Soloveitchik's success at constructing a phenomenology of, rather than an apology for, halakha.

UNFORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, Hartman's interpretation is less convincing than he believes. Although *Halakhic Man* has great historical significance, many, even in the Orthodox community, have brushed it aside as a theo-



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logically meaningless text. Living in an age in which theologians such as George Lindbeck and Stanley Hauerwas have demonstrated the rootedness of religion in community and culture, Soloveitchik's a-contextual and a-cultural notion of Jewish law can seem somewhat dated. Nowhere in Soloveitchik's scientific, mathematical description of Jewish law does he explain the crucial role of culture, politics, and community in the fashioning of a Jewish legal system. In highlighting the phenomenological aspects of Soloveitchik's project, Hartman manages to personalize and socialize the distant and somewhat dated scientific and mathematical categories employed by his teacher.

Hartman finds himself on firmer ground when he turns to a discussion of Soloveitchik's essay "The Lonely Man of Faith." Written in the 1960s, "The Lonely Man of Faith" is Soloveitchik's attempt to offer a philosophical anthropology of mankind. It focuses on the question of what it means to be a man of faith in the modern world. However, what makes "The Lonely Man of Faith" an extraordinary text, according to Hartman, is its attempt "to create a discussion between the Jewish and non-Jewish traditions." Thus, contrary to those who try to intellectually limit Soloveitchik by alleging that the essay is addressed only to the Jewish faith experience, Hartman demonstrates that Soloveitchik meant to address a universal audience. Hartman's point is strengthened by the fact that "The Lonely Man of Faith" was originally delivered at St. Joseph's Seminary, a Catholic institution in Boston, Massachusetts.

Likewise, for Hartman, Soloveitchik's citing of non-Jewish thinkers such as Kant and Kierkegaard should not be seen as an example of apologetics. Instead, it should be appreciated as Soloveitchik's attempt to enter into a discussion with the general world of faith on questions pertaining to the nature of the religious experi-

ence. As with his use of scientific sources in *Halakhic Man*, Soloveitchik's employment of philosophical and theological sources in "The Lonely Man of Faith" served a specific theological purpose that could not be accomplished in any other way.

As universalistic as "The Lonely Man of Faith" appears to be, Hartman is right to dwell on yet another essay—"Confrontation"—that highlights the more particularistic side of Soloveitchik's thought. First delivered in the 1960s to an Orthodox rabbinical group, "Confrontation" represents Soloveitchik's attempt to deal with the growing ecumenical tide in American religious circles. Though it is written in the style of an informal meditation on the topic of interfaith dialogue, it proscriptively argues that, theologically speaking, it is impossible for Jews to find a common language in which to speak with other religions.

In his analysis of "Confrontation," Hartman incisively points out that it is an oversimplification to say that in the essay Soloveitchik does away with any common language of faith. Rather, says Hartman, the essay shows

itself to be primarily directed "at [preventing] a public confrontation that may lead to some form of compromise or accommodation." For Soloveitchik, the notion of interfaith dialogue conjured up memories of medieval disputations and the immense and overwhelming power of the Church. However, according to Hartman,

R. Soloveitchik never repudiated intellectual study, mutual exchange of ideas, and the importance of making sense of Judaism within a larger intellectual frame of reference. . . . There is a difference between studying and being engaged as an individual with texts by Kierkegaard, Barth, Luther, or Augustine and being invited by others for a public confrontation that may lead to some form of accommodation and compromise.

FOR HARTMAN, even Rabbi Soloveitchik's most insular and particularistic writings retained a strong sense of intellectual openness that separated



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them from the narrower positions staked out by his rabbinic predecessors. Hartman's reading pulls Orthodoxy out of intellectual isolation and into the American religious public sphere without compromising its halakhic authenticity.

While, in the end, Hartman's book fails to adequately explain how those on the "Orthodox Right," whom he characterizes as "revisionists," have managed to arrive at a more insular and less intellectually open portrait of Soloveitchik, his careful and precise reading of Rabbi Soloveitchik's writings is our most thorough interpretation to date. And with thousands of teachers, students, and academics from all denominations and faiths flocking to hear David Hartman at his Jerusalem-based Institute, it is only a matter of time until the Jewish world at large begins speaking about Rabbi Hartman's theological vision in its own right.

Encountering Islam

THE ISLAMIC ROOTS OF DEMOCRATIC PLURALISM. By ABDULAZIZ SACHEDINA. Oxford University Press. 175 pp. \$25.

THE MONKS OF TIBHIRINE: FAITH, LOVE, AND TERROR IN ALGERIA. By JOHN W. KISER III. St. Martin's. 288 pp. \$25.95.

Reviewed by Andrew J. Bacevich

ABDULAZIZ SACHEDINA is a man with a mission. He is determined to demonstrate that when it comes to the West's relations with Islam, there need be no "clash of civilizations." Properly understood, Islam is compatible with—indeed, is positively conducive to—democratic pluralism, religious

ANDREW J. BACEVICH teaches international relations at Boston University.

tolerance, and respect for human rights.

The author bravely and forthrightly acknowledges that Islam as it actually exists too often exhibits the very inverse of these qualities. But that Islam he dismisses as ossified and false. Authentic Islam has been lost. Professor Sachedina proposes nothing less than to rediscover Islam as it existed in the days of the Prophet. Having done so, he intends to "reinterpret it, reconstruct it, and make it relevant to the present."

The basis for this rediscovery and reinterpretation lies in sacred scripture. A "meticulous sifting of the Koranic exegetical materials, both classical and contemporary," the author believes, holds the potential of revealing "various (and subtle) possibilities of interpretation." Only through such a "creative reappropriation"—one that revives "the original pluralism of the Koran"—will it become possible for Islam to "abide with otherness" in the modern world.

This is, to put it mildly, an ambitious project, requiring considerable erudition but also considerable courage. (For his temerity in even suggesting the need for Islamic reform, Sachedina, a professor of religious studies at the University of Virginia, became the target of a *fatwa* intended to silence him.) Of particular note, it is a project that the author undertakes as much on behalf of the West as on behalf of Islam itself—for only through Islam can the West resolve the contradictions with which it finds itself beset. "Among world religions," he writes,

Islam provides the *sole* coherent worldview of any political significance, and consequently it serves as the *only* vital external perspective on the modern project of a secular world order. It is, probably, the *only* thoroughly religious critique of the international public order with its secularist and liberal presup-

On October 31, 2000, Pope John Paul II proclaimed Thomas More the patron saint of statesmen and politicians, adding to More's position as patron of lawyers. Already distinguished in his own times as a man of great learning, wit, and faith, he was martyred over a point of law. His life may be viewed as an example of the unity of faith and reason. Yet from the perspective of those around him, including his family, More's actions seemed anything but reasonable, prudent, or wise; in fact, his death seemed more like folly ...



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positions. . . [Islam] stands out as the *only* monotheistic tradition that can help deepen the West's self-understanding in its liberal project of a public international order. (Emphasis added.)

This is, to say the least, a very large claim and—to a believer who is not a Muslim—a somewhat off-putting one.

Still, in the aftermath of September 11, with the United States engaged in a “war against terror” that is more accurately a war against militant, radical Islam, any plausible argument that holds out the prospect of a more benign alternative merits respectful consideration.

THE ISLAMIC ROOTS of Democratic Pluralism is short, dense, and bone dry—all but impossible, despite its fewer than 140 pages of actual text, to wade through in a single sitting. Its methodology is akin to that of a legal brief. In marshaling evidence in support of his hypothesis, the author invites attention to specific and carefully selected scriptural passages, some of them ambiguous on their face, and then explains how, if correctly deciphered, they actually testify to a (once) pluralistic and tolerant Islam. Anticipating the arguments of skeptics, he cites other passages, seemingly unambiguous in expressing illiberal sentiments, and explains how their actual meaning is other than might seem.

A case in point is the author's contention that the Koran “accepts religious pluralism as given, and even necessary.” Sachedina bases this contention on the passage that states

The people were one community (*umma*); then God sent forth the Prophets, good tidings to bear and warning, and He sent down with them the Book, that he might decide the people touching their differences. (K. 2:213)

Acknowledging that the verb in the first sentence is in the past tense, Sachedina points out that in the original Arabic it can also, legitimately, be rendered in the present. Hence, he argues, the Koran finds that still today the people are “one nation.” This in turn constitutes, he believes, an injunction on behalf of religious pluralism, since intolerance would violate the Koranic prescription for oneness.

Elsewhere, however, the Koran contradicts this reading of K. 2:213 in no uncertain terms—or at least it appears to do so.

Whoso desires another religion than Islam, it shall not be accepted of him; in the next world he shall be among the losers. (K. 3:85)

Other interpreters of the Koran have sought to resolve such apparent inconsistencies by explaining that later passages abrogate or supersede earlier ones. Thus, K. 3:85 might trump K. 2:213. Sachedina finds no legitimate basis for this practice. To remove the apparent contradiction, he instead reinterprets K. 3:85 so as to remove its sting. In this passage, he explains, “Islam” actually refers not to a specific religion but to the general human obligation to “submit” (in Arabic, *islam*) to God. According to Sachedina, the Koran is, as it were, agnostic on the manner of submis-

sion (at least for adherents of the Abrahamic tradition); it is adamant only that those refusing to do so at all are destined to end up losers in the world to come.

And so the author proceeds, finding in the Koran evidence, convincing in his view, that authentic Islam is friendly to human rights and freedom of conscience, compatible with democracy, and prone not to war and violence but to the quest for justice and peace.

For this reviewer—not a specialist in Islam—Sachedina's brief qualifies as suggestive but falls well short of compelling. But even giving the author the benefit of the doubt one bumps up against the inevitable question: So what? Even if we stipulate that this one academic's imaginative remapping of the Koran *ought* to invalidate contrary readings, it would remain the height of folly to expect large-scale change in actually existing Islam to result anytime soon. *The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism* offers readers a vision of the ideal. But their concern is with the real—not theory but practice, not theology as it should be but the Islamic world as it is.

In a sense, Sachedina occupies a position comparable to that of an honest defender of socialism. Socialism, of course, had many dishonest defenders—those who turned a blind eye to the hideous deformities of the



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Soviet Union or the People's Republic of China while proclaiming that each offered a path to utopia. But socialism had honest defenders as well—those who entertained no illusions about Stalin or Mao but who clung to the dream of a humane and democratic alternative to capitalism. These were decent, well-intentioned, even admirable people. But they were given to wishful thinking that in the end did not prove especially useful.

A RADICALLY DIFFERENT approach to bridging the divide between the West and Islam—one that de-emphasizes theological rigor in favor of human agency—can be found in John Kiser's compulsively readable and deeply moving account of *The Monks of Tibhirine*.

Located in the Atlas Mountains of Algeria, Tibhirine is an obscure and impoverished village that from 1938 until 1996 was also the site of a Trappist monastery, Notre Dame de l'Atlas. The monks who founded and sustained this small monastic community were Frenchmen. The Algerians inhabiting the village and surrounding countryside were almost all Mus-

lims. At its core, the story that Kiser tells is of the relationship between the two—in particular of the efforts by the Trappists to live in solidarity with the people of Tibhirine and, in so doing, to find common ground between Christianity and Islam.

Yet *The Monks of Tibhirine* is much more than that. Into its complex tapestry, Kiser, an independent scholar, has woven insights regarding the decline (as well as the persistence) of European religiosity. He provides a concise account of Algeria's tortured history, both under French rule and since independence. He describes the travails of Algeria's small and struggling Christian community. And he details the origins and conduct of the civil war that ravaged Algeria through the 1990s. That conflict, triggered when the government in Algiers canceled elections that seemed likely to deliver political power to Islamic radicals, killed untold thousands and by 1996 culminated in the kidnapping and brutal murder of seven of Tibhirine's monks and the shuttering of their monastery.

Kiser does not claim to have identified the perpetrators of this atrocity,

which remains shrouded in mystery. It seems fair to say that he views that mystery as incidental. The identity of the killers matters less than the manner in which this handful of implacably determined French monks bore witness to Christ as they poured out their lives on behalf of their Muslim neighbors.

Through a series of fully realized portraits, Kiser introduces the reader to each of his Trappist protagonists. They are a varied lot: independent spirits, not without quirks and foibles, some gruff, some cranky, some fearful, all in the end courageous. Above them all looms the charismatic figure of Christian de Chergé, the ex-soldier who during France's war to keep Algeria under its heel fell in love with the country and its people. A relentless seeker after divine truth, equal parts wild romantic and brilliant intellectual, he reaches the end of a lengthy spiritual journey by becoming the prior of Notre Dame de l'Atlas. He would be its last. (See his last testament in FT, August/September 1996.)

IT IS DE CHERGÉ—responding to his conviction that “Muslims sing the same song, only in a different key”—who prods and cajoles his fellows into ever greater openness toward Islam. It is de Chergé who insists that, whatever the obstacles and hazards involved, the Gospels were summoning them to take not just the first step, but the second and the third. As Christians living in Algeria, this had become their calling. It was “not a matter of reciprocity,” he observed. “The love of Jesus was gratuitous. It did not wait for a response.” And it did not require or expect repayment. For the monks of Tibhirine, singing in harmony with their Muslim brothers entailed a certain willingness to stray beyond the strict confines of theological convention. However this may discomfit defenders of orthodoxy, the men of Notre Dame de l'Atlas who suffered martyrdom for their

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cause command the utmost respect.

The riches contained within this book are many and varied. Chief among them may be the heightened appreciation that it offers for the rigor and the allure of monasticism. Living apart from the world, the inhabitants of Notre Dame de l'Atlas still engaged the world around them in a way that was both intimate and profound. Subordinating themselves to a rule of discipline and austerity, they found astonishing freedom. Committed to lives of prayer and contemplation, they became men of action, summoned to achieve greatness and exhibit bravery under conditions of enormous duress. Life in what most of us call "the real world" appears pale by comparison.

To be informed about what Islam (perhaps) once was and someday (perhaps) could be again, consult Sachedina. For a stirring, inspirational, and uplifting reminder that man was after all made in God's image, read Kiser.

BRIEFLY NOTED

FASCISM AND COMMUNISM. By FRANÇOIS FURET and ERNST NOLTE. Translated by KATHERINE GOLSAN, with a preface by TZVETAN TODOROV. *University of Nebraska Press*. 100 pp. \$35.

The late French historian François Furet's magisterial 1995 book on communism and the drama of the twentieth century, *The Passing of an Illusion*, devoted a long footnote to German historian Ernst Nolte's controversial interpretation of European fascism. A remarkable exchange of letters ensued between the two men, exploring the continuities and disagreements in their views on totalitarianism. Published as a small book in France shortly after Furet's death in 1997, and ably translated into English here, the letters represent a true dialogue: respectful, even when differ-

ences are deep, in search of the truth. Both authors embrace what Nolte calls a "genetico-historical" approach to the rise of fascism and Nazism. But for Nolte, fascism emerged as a defensive reaction to the menace of communism. Furet, in sharp contrast, sees the two totalitarian movements as dangerously utopian efforts to overcome the spiritual dissatisfactions of liberal democratic modernity. Furet rightly criticizes Nolte's causal explanation of fascism and Nazism as exculpatory, inadequate to the full horror—and revolutionary nature—of national and racial totalitarianism, yet he refuses to dismiss his German counterpart's important writings as those of a Hitler apologist, as many on the left have hastily done. Nolte makes clear that he fully acknowledges the exceptional status of the destruction of European Jews in the Holocaust, though he takes too seriously the arguments of Holocaust deniers—if only to rebut them. The exchange ends with a meditation by Furet on "the melancholy backdrop" of the end of the millennium, where he sees an unrepentant left seeking "the oldest dream of modern democracy"—to separate democracy and capitalism, when they run inevitably together—and a triumphant global capitalism eroding cultural differences, with unpredictable but potentially tragic consequences. To get the most from reading these often profound and subtle letters, one should also read *The Passing of an Illusion*, and have at least some familiarity with Nolte's sadly out-of-print *Three Faces of Fascism*.

— Brian C. Anderson

IN DEFENSE OF RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES. By ELMER JOHN THIessen. *McGill-Queen's University Press*. 396 pp. \$75.

Education based upon religious convictions is accused of everything from dividing society into warring camps

to indoctrinating children in a way that prevents them from achieving autonomy and critical consciousness. Religious schools, it is charged, deny opportunities to poor and minority children while failing to provide an adequate education to those pupils unfortunate enough to attend them. Hotbeds of intolerance, they deny academic freedom to their staffs and engage in censorship of what their pupils may read or discuss, unlike public schools, which practice a careful neutrality and respect toward all opinions. It matters little that none of these charges stands up under careful investigation, or that remarkably little empirical evidence has been advanced to support them. Nor does it seem to matter that the same charges have been massively refuted by historical experience since the 1830s, when, in response to the "common school" movement, explicitly Catholic and Protestant schools were established, to a similar chorus of warnings. With a consistency rare in educational research, studies have found that pupils in and graduates of religious schools are, if anything, more tolerant of racial and religious differences than are those educated in public schools. Elmer John Thiessen, who teaches philosophy at a public university in Canada, deals with each of the accusations and shows how they all rest upon either an ignorance of the facts or a misunderstanding of the issues, and often upon both. His new book is the most comprehensive and systematic treatment of these controversial questions now available. Arguably the most interesting part of his argument is its recapitulation of his 1993 book, *Teaching for Commitment*. The charge that religious schools (and families) necessarily "indoctrinate" is based, Thiessen shows, upon a misunderstanding of the role of commitments in the formation of those qualities of character that allow for openness to others and respect for their beliefs. "It would seem," he writes in his new

book, "that a stable and coherent primary culture is essential for children to develop a sense of identity, which is in turn a prerequisite to developing a tolerant and loving relationship with others. . . . Tolerance grows out of security and acceptance."

— Charles L. Glenn

GOD'S CALL: MORAL REALISM, GOD'S COMMANDS, AND HUMAN AUTONOMY. By JOHN E. HARE. *Eerdmans*. 122 pp. \$11 paper.

This book by John E. Hare, son of influential (and recently deceased) philosopher R. M. Hare, is full of stimulating ideas that call for elaboration. Hare takes on important arguments of our day while doing historical philosophy. He begins by presenting a novel, brief history of arguments in analytic philosophy between moral realism (the view that moral properties are objectively real) and moral expressivism (the view that moral judgments are subjective expressions). He reads the debate as a series of concessions that culminate in his own "prescriptive realism," according

to which moral evaluation responds to a call that, while it comes from outside ourselves, is fitting to agents like ourselves, and which we must endorse or resist. Later sections of the book, which are more accessible and engaging for the general reader, focus on Duns Scotus' Divine Command Theory (DCT). Following Scotus, Hare argues that morality supervenes on, but cannot be deduced from, our nature. He is thus against natural law theory but for a DCT in which God, by creating rational creatures, is bound to make their highest end a relationship with the divine persons, but free to pursue that end via any number of routes. God's commands announce which route God has selected. Hare argues that such a morality is not arbitrary, because it fits the nature God gave us in creation; still, it is contingent, and the "second table" of the Ten Commandments might have been rather different, had God decided to make it so. In the end, Hare defends DCT against the well-known charge that it is heteronymous by offering an unusual reading of Kant that challenges those who dismiss his theological writings

for their hostility to orthodox piety. Those with some training in theological ethics will find Hare's reflections on enduring moral questions to be a welcome stimulus to deeper thinking.

— Jesse Couenhoven

THE DEATH OF THE WEST. By PATRICK J. BUCHANAN. *St. Martin's*. 308 pp. \$25.95.

Whatever may be his declining electoral fortunes—and there is no doubt about his current political marginalization—Patrick Buchanan speaks for many angry and disaffected Americans who alternate between what they perceive as the triumph of the liberal elites and a bellicose resolve to launch a counterrevolution. The author declares, "Political adversaries who use terms like *Nazi*, *fascist*, *anti-Semite*, *nativist*, *homophobe*, *bigot*, *xenophobe*, and *extremist* have started a fight and should be accommodated." Mr. Buchanan, of course, has been called all those things, and he's not going to take it lying down. The present book, subtitled "How Dying Populations and Immigrant Invasions Imperil Our Country and Civilization," is a thesaurus of quotations from people on the variegated left who, whether they mean it or are just playing radical games, have declared war on our country, Western civilization, and common sense. Buchanan depicts, with the help of depressingly indisputable data, the apparent death wish of European countries that have stopped having babies and face the prospect of losing their national identities under the pressure of Muslim immigration and EU homogenization. Less persuasive is his equating that with Mexican immigration in this country. Latinos are, after all, overwhelmingly Christian, and even Catholic, and Buchanan's most emphatic affirmation, in agreement with a distinguished line of conservative thinkers, is that culture is grounded in cult.

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The chapter on the civil rights establishment, and its fulfillment of Eric Hoffer's maxim that every cause eventually becomes a business and then a racket, is also effective, as is his critique of the "world citizenship" fantasies surrounding the UN and cognate institutions. Many readers who agree that the U.S. was intended to be a republic and not an empire will nonetheless disagree with what can only be described as the author's radical isolationism, including his restated doubts as to whether World War II was ours to fight and his suggestion that Israel is, at least in the long term, a lost cause. It should be noted that the book was essentially written before September 11, and some last minute stitchings about what the war on terrorism might mean for the world and American culture do not sit well with the burden of his argument. *The Death of the West* is a high-decibel jeremiad that calls the sullenly resentful to stop whining and man the barricades. It gives voice to a brand of radical conservatism that is determined not to be ignored. One can too easily imagine political and ideological reconfigurations in which it cannot be ignored.

PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS: A STUDY OF DECLINE. By RICHARD A. POSNER. *Harvard University Press*. 408 pp. \$29.95.

In his third—or is it the fourth?—ambitious book in the past twelve months, Judge Posner ransacks what must be an impressive file of clippings to support his charge that those who are called public intellectuals, and academics who moonlight as such, are frequently irresponsible. He recommends that academics stick to their specialty, where colleagues can hold them accountable for what they say. Posner's specialty is the law. *Public Intellectuals* is persuasive evidence in support of his recommendation.

JANE ADDAMS AND THE DREAM OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY: A LIFE. By JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN. *Basic*. 352 pp. \$28.

This is clearly a labor of love. Addams, forever associated with Hull House in Chicago and the settlement movement it generated, was once, Elshtain plausibly asserts, the best known and perhaps the most admired woman in America. She alienated many during World War I with her outspoken pacifism, and by the time she died at age seventy-five in 1935 her reputation was in deep eclipse. Elshtain believes that her mistakes, and there were many, were those of a large and generous heart, and that her writings, especially those on an earlier and more humane vision of feminism, deserve renewed attention today. Jane Addams is an important part of the American story, and in Jean Elshtain she has found an affectionate and discerning biographer.

THE NAT HENTOFF READER. By NAT HENTOFF. *Da Capo*. 322 pp. \$16.50 paper.

The clue to the fatal charm of Nat Hentoff is the virtue of honesty. He also writes very well—on jazz, civil liberties, and people who are ignored because they are of no political importance to the right or the left. He has been causing trouble for decades, in the *Village Voice*, the *New Yorker*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and his own syndicated column. He's a "First Amendment absolutist" who believes nothing should be censored, and a powerful advocate of the rights of the unborn and the disabled. He won the friendship of the scatological comedian Lenny Bruce and of the champion of Catholic orthodoxy, John Cardinal O'Connor. Nat Hentoff is Nat Hentoff, and this book brings together some of the best of the many reasons for paying attention to one of the great contrarians of our time.

THE CLOSED CIRCLE: AN INTERPRETATION OF THE ARABS. By DAVID PRYCE-JONES. *Ivan R. Dee*. 464 pp. \$16.95 paper.

A grim but immensely readable and informative account of the Arab world and the Arab mind, first published in 1989 and reissued with a post-September 11 preface by the author. The interpretation is the more convincing by virtue of being several steps removed from the exigencies of present conflicts. Concentrating on the Middle East since World War II, Pryce-Jones shows how one Arab regime after another has been but a repeat of tribal allegiances played out in a pattern of lust for power and revenge, reflecting a shame-honor culture that leaves no room for the concept, never mind the pursuit, of the common good. We have to hope that *The Closed Circle* is not the last word, but it is a powerfully sobering story that severely tempers any hopes that the Arab world will be moving toward the establishment of free and democratic societies in the foreseeable future.

THE VOICES OF MOREBATH: REFORMATION AND REBELLION IN AN ENGLISH VILLAGE. By EAMON DUFFY. *Yale University Press*. 208 pp. \$22.50.

Admirers of Duffy's justly acclaimed *The Stripping of the Altars* will welcome

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this extended footnote to his argument that the Protestant Reformation was, for the most part, an elitist and violent imposition upon a solidly Catholic England. Morebath is a small sheep-farming village on the southern edge of Exmoor, and from 1520 to 1574 its parson, Sir Christopher Trychay (Catholic priests were then called "Sir" rather than "Father"), kept minute and still extant accounts of church life, which was then coterminous with village life. It is a poignant story of people trying to hold on to their faith and community, but finally coming to terms with changes to which royal power gave the appearance of inevitability.

CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES ON LEGAL THOUGHT. Edited by MICHAEL MCCONNELL et al. *Yale University Press*. 510 pp. \$26.95 paper.

Many years ago Harold J. Berman, who writes the Foreword to this volume, published a little book on the relationship between religion and law, which came as something of a surprise to a legal profession that, with few exceptions, assumed there was none. This book is evidence of how much has changed, and how much is still to be done. Thirty essays, some of them by FT contributors, cover everything from liberal theory to race theory to feminism to the anthropological presuppositions of

criminal law, all written from explicitly Christian perspectives.

PATRIOTISM AND FRATERNALISM IN THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS. By CHRISTOPHER J. KAUFFMAN. *Herder & Herder*. 174 pp. \$19.95.

An institutional history of the Fourth Degree, or "Sir Knights," of the large and influential fraternal organization of lay Catholics. There are no surprises or exposés with respect to the internal workings of the K of C, but Kauffman supplies a useful account of the range of the organization's good works over more than a century, and the book is especially rich in its attention to the various faces of the anti-Catholicism that it attempted to counter.

HIS INVENTIONS SO FERTILE: A LIFE OF CHRISTOPHER WREN. By ADRIAN TINNISWOOD. *Oxford University Press*. 462 pp. \$35.

Wren left almost nothing in the way of letters, journals, or other personal testimony, so this wholly admiring story is told on the basis of his works. Chiefly, of course, the churches and other architectural monuments erected after the great fire of London in 1666. What the author cannot tell us about Wren the man is, in part, compensated by engagingly instructive

excurses on science, religion, politics, and courtly goings-on in seventeenth-century England.

DICTIONARY OF POPES AND THE PAPACY. *Herder & Herder*. 278 pp. \$50.

The first in what is planned as a multivolume translation of *Lexikon für Theologie unter Kirche*, originally edited by Karl Rahner and, in its revised edition, by Walter Cardinal Kasper. This is a splendid resource. The articles are, with few exceptions, thorough, careful, and balanced in their judgments. One hopes the publisher will be able to reduce the price for forthcoming volumes. And surely an English-language translation can manage to get more English-language sources in the extensive, but German-dominated, bibliographies appended to almost every article.

AMERICAN CATHOLICS THROUGH THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. By CLAIRE E. WOLFEICH. *Crossroad*. 211 pp. \$24.95.

An intelligent and fair-minded overview of how Catholic laity—from Dorothy Day and Mario Cuomo to the lesser known—understand the living out of their faith, concluding with the recognition of tensions between affirming lay vocations and church authority.

THE PUBLIC SQUARE

A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

Richard John Neuhaus

SCANDAL TIME

The timing, it seems, could not have been worse. In last month's issue I offered my considered and heartfelt defense of Father Maciel, founder of the Legionaries of Christ, against unfounded charges of sexual abuse. I meant and I mean every word of what I said there. Just after the issue had gone to press, however, scandals involving sexual abuse by priests in Boston exploded, creating a level of public outrage and suspicion that may be unparalleled in recent history. The climate is not conducive to calm or careful thought about priests and sexual molestation. Outrage and suspicion readily lead to excess, but, with respect to developments in Boston, it is not easy to say how much outrage and suspicion is too much.

Professor Philip Jenkins of Penn State University has written extensively on sexual abuse by priests, also in these pages (see "The Uses of Clerical Scandal," February 1996). He is an acute student of the ways in which the media, lawyers, and insurance companies—along with angry Catholics, both liberal and conservative—are practiced at exploiting scandal in the service of their several interests. Scholars point out that the incidence of abusing children or minors is no greater, and may be less, among priests than among Protestant clergy, teachers, social workers, and similar professions. But, it is noted, Catholic clergy are more attractive targets for lawsuits because the entire diocese or archdiocese can be sued. That is a legal liability of the Church's hierarchical structure. Moreover, the expressions of outrage by many in the

media are attended by an ulterior agenda, namely, discrediting the Catholic teaching on human sexuality, about which they are genuinely outraged. These and other considerations can and should be taken into account, but the tragic fact remains that great wrongs have been done, and there is no avoiding the conclusion that, in Boston and elsewhere, some bishops bear a heavy burden of responsibility.

Children have been hurt, solemn vows have been betrayed, and a false sense of compassion—joined to a protective clericalism—has apparently permitted some priests to do terrible things again and again. For some Catholics, this is a time that will test their faith in Christ and his Church, as distinct from their faith in the holiness, or even competence, of some of the Church's leaders. Catholics used to be good at that sort of thing, pointing to figures such as Alexander VI (Pope from 1492 to 1503) whose thorough corruption—he gained the papacy by bribery and used it to benefit his illegitimate children—was thought to prove that the truth of the Church and the validity of her sacraments were not dependent upon the holiness of her leaders. In the fourth century, the Donatist heretics took the opposite position, and Catholics have been exuberant in their condemnation of Donatism. We all have a steep stake in the rightness of that condemnation. At the same time, the orthodoxy of anti-Donatism is not to be confused with moral indifference. All three synoptic gospels report the warning of Jesus about those who corrupt the innocence of children. "It would be better for him if a millstone were tied around his neck and he were cast into the depths of the sea."

Conformed to the Culture

The current scandals constitute a painful moment of truth for bishops, heads of religious orders, and others responsible for the moral integrity of the Church's ministry. More often than not, the priests allegedly involved in these scandals are now in their sixties and seventies or even older. They received their formation and were ordained in the 1960s and 1970s when, in addition to false compassion and clerical

protectiveness, there was in sectors of the Church a wink-and-a-nudge attitude toward what were viewed as sexual peccadilloes. Anyone who was around during those years, and had eyes to see, knows that was the case. Ecumenically, and especially among clergy involved in social activism, both Protestant and Catholic, there was frequent confusion and laxity with respect to sexual morality—heterosexual, homosexual, and unspecified. That is deplorable but should not surprise. In this way, too, the institutions of religion are too often conformed to the culture of which they are part.

Among Catholics, the situation is generally very different with today's seminarians and younger priests. It is not unusual to encounter priests who claim they were ordained in, say, the 1970s with the expectation that the celibacy requirement would be abandoned within a few years. Many of them have since left the active priesthood. For others, the "acceptance" of homosexuality and the rejection of every form of "homophobia" was clearly the approved attitude. Today, I think it fair to say that seminarians and younger priests know beyond doubt what is expected of them in terms of faithfulness to the Church's teaching. But the penalty for past laxity and malfeasance is now coming due, and has been coming due since the reality of sexual abuse by priests was brought to public attention more than a decade ago. Of course the Church will survive, and more than survive, but I expect this storm is not going to pass any time soon. I expect we have not yet seen its full fury. I very much wish that I were more confident than I am that every bishop understands that there can now be no returning to business as usual. The word crisis is much overused, but this is a crisis.

Despite all the talk about the pervasive "nonjudgmentalism" in our culture, about some things judgments are much harsher today. In anything having to do with children, for instance, what some viewed as embarrassing misbehavior in the 1970s was, by the 1990s, viewed as a heinous crime. Psychological theory, law, and public attitudes have all changed dramatically. The very subject of homosexuality was, not so very long ago, pretty much in the closet. Like most people, bishops did not know, or did not want to know, about rude things that men did together, and sometimes did with little boys. Today's scandals notwithstanding, there was something to be said for such reticence and naiveté, even if the naiveté was sometimes feigned. When it comes to priestly adherence to the Church's teaching, zero tolerance must now be the order of the day. The enforcement of zero tolerance, in this connection and others, can lead to ridiculous extremes and can inhibit natural and healthy interactions, especially in working with young

people, but that, too, is probably part of the price to be paid.

There was a similar sense of crisis following the first public revelations of sexual abuse by priests in the mid-eighties, but then the issue receded after CNN notoriously sensationalized charges against the late Joseph Cardinal Bernardin of Chicago in 1993 and the charges turned out to be false. That incident helped remind people that priests, too, are to be deemed innocent until proven guilty. In the current climate of outrage, we need to be reminded of that truth again. Unbridled outrage can too easily become hysteria. One recalls that during the same period, there was a blizzard of criminal charges and lawsuits over alleged abuses, including satanic rituals and other grotesqueries, perpetrated by people working in day care centers. Whole communities around the country were caught up in a frenzy of mutual recriminations, and many people went to jail, until the heroic and almost single-handed work of Dorothy Rabinowitz of the *Wall Street Journal* exposed the madness for what it was.

Other Casualties

Among the potential casualties of the present scandal is severe damage to what has historically been called the "liberty of the Church" to govern her own affairs. Catholics have a distinct tradition of canon law that goes back to the Council of Nicaea in 325 and took lasting form with Gratian's *Decretum* in the twelfth century. This history of ecclesiastical liberty is basic to the various exemptions and immunities in current law and practice that protect religious freedom not just for Catholics but for everyone. The right of religious institutions to govern themselves may be gravely eroded under pressure from lawyers, insurance companies, and the state. The ruthlessness of many in the legal profession should not be underestimated. As Peter Steinfels writes in the *New York Times*, it has now been "discovered that lawyers for plaintiffs could play hardball, too, inflating charges and using the news media to play on public fears and prejudices in hopes of embarrassing the Church into settlements." With respect to self-governance, "confidentiality" is now commonly translated as "secrecy" and "discretion" as "evasion." The cultural revolution popularized the slogan that the personal is the political. So also, it now seems, the religious is the political, and the legal. All of life is to be lived on the front pages or in the courtroom, or at least under the threat of the front pages and the courtroom.

News reports claiming that a certain number of priests have been charged with abuse and that the claims were settled out of court must not be

interpreted to mean that the priests are guilty. Some of them insisted and insist that they are innocent, but bishops were advised by lawyers and insurance companies that a legal defense against the charges would cost much more than settlement out of court, and could well end up in a guilty verdict entailing even greater financial liability. In some cases, settlements were agreed to with the guarantee that they would remain forever confidential. In Boston, that guarantee has now been broken by court order. This can be seen as an ominous encroachment by the state on the Church's right to self-governance. It can also be argued that the Church forfeited that right by failing to govern itself, and by surrendering episcopal governance to lawyers and insurance companies.

At least in some cases, there can be no question of the state's legitimate interest. To cite the most notorious instance, that of the defrocked John Geoghan, he is already convicted of one criminal act, and is charged with many more. Sin is the business of the Church, and crime is the business of the state. There was once a time, centuries ago, when there were ecclesiastical courts to deal with clerics who committed sins that were also crimes. Although it had no standing in law, that way of handling things continued in a vestigial and informal way up to our day. If the cops suspected Father of criminal activity, it was reported to the bishop in the confidence that he would take care of it. No more.

Another potential casualty is an erosion of confidence in the possibility of repentance and amendment of life. Such confidence is dismissed as "naïve" when it comes to priests being given another chance. But the belief in the power of the grace of God to transform lives is at the heart of Christian faith, and is overwhelmingly supported by Scripture and the experience of innumerable Christians. Belief in the gift of grace, however, is perfectly consistent with knowing that the gift is not always effectively received. When a priest repents after being caught dipping into the collection plate, there is forgiveness. There is even forgiveness, if he is repentant, after he has done it several times, but there are also secure measures for denying him access to the collection plate. Children and the integrity of sacred vows are immeasurably more valuable than the collection plate. It is now evident that it is much easier to keep violators away from collection plates than to keep them away from children.

The Meaning of Episcopos

Bernard Cardinal Law of Boston was already in 1993 thought to be taking a "hard line," going through diocesan files to find any cases in which priests had believably been accused of molestation, and trying to

make sure they were not assigned to positions involving regular work with minors. It now seems obvious that some priests eluded such scrutiny. In other cases assignments were made on the basis of medical and psychological counsel that at the time was thought to be perfectly sound. There were also experts who warned that simply getting rid of a priest would loose a sexual predator on the society. The beating that Cardinal Law has taken is, in large part, because of his inability to anticipate changes in medical and psychological thinking about sex abuse and sex abusers. At the same time, the medicalizing of gross wrongdoing too often lets ever-changing psychological theory trump commonsense judgments about sin and its consequences. In any event, Cardinal Law has confessed that, in all of this, he has made "tragic mistakes." It is not possible to disagree. The word bishop is derived from the Greek *episcopos*, which means overseer, and there would seem to be no doubt that there have been grave deficiencies in the moral oversight of some of the clergy of Boston.

An outraged reader writes that, if I do not publicly call for Cardinal Law's resignation, I am clearly "circling the ecclesiastical wagons in defense of the indefensible." Nonsense. Saying who should be placed or replaced as a bishop is way above my pay grade. Many people, including many devout and orthodox Catholics, are calling for the Cardinal's resignation. A wire service story is headed, "Boston Cardinal Vows to Stay, Despite Poll Numbers." In the Catholic Church, bishops do not run for election. Nor are they to be viewed, or at least not chiefly, as CEOs of a corporation. In the Catholic Church, a bishop is a successor to the apostles appointed to his see by the Bishop of Rome. The bishop's task is "to teach, to sanctify, and to govern." Cardinal Law has been an outstanding teacher of the faith, and was instrumental, not incidentally, in producing the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Nobody can complain about his fidelity to his sacramental duties. In the third task, that of governing oversight, he has, as he has confessed, made tragic mistakes. His future as Archbishop of Boston is a matter between him, his conscience, and the Pope. He may conclude that the effectiveness of his ministry in Boston has been crippled beyond repair. I sincerely hope not. His resignation would be a severe loss to the Church in the United States. Nor dare we despair of God's bringing great good out of these terrible events. There cannot help but be a deeper awareness of sin, its consequences, and our radical dependence upon grace—and such deepened awareness is a precondition for spiritual renewal.

There is an unseemly readiness on the part of many, including some Catholics, to believe the worst. What we know for sure is wretched enough. We would not

know what we do know without the reporting of the *Boston Globe*. It is pointed out that the *Globe*, like its owner the *New York Times*, is no friend of the Church. The suggestion is not that we should kill the messenger, but that we should be keenly aware that the messenger has, on issue after issue, points to score against the teaching and claims of the Catholic Church; that the messenger is not a neutral party. All that is true, but it is of limited pertinence. It is also true that Catholics should not be apologetic about wanting to defend the Church. It is their duty. Doing that duty, however, is not incompatible with, but in fact requires, a recognition that, in this case as in so many others through history, leaders of the Church are guilty of giving ammunition to those who would attack her. Throughout his pontificate, John Paul II has been urging such a candid recognition, which is at the heart of our understanding that the Church is a community of sinners called to be saints.

That having been said, what has happened in Boston is inexcusable. Those responsible can be forgiven, but what they did cannot be excused. And again, Boston is not an isolated instance. Catholics and others who wish the Church well should be braced for the probability that the storm of scandal is by no means past. It will only be magnified if bishops and heads of religious orders have not learned from what happened in Boston. They must take the governance of the Church back from lawyers, insurance companies, spin doctors, blackmailers, and priests who are misguidedly protective of colleagues engaged in great evil. Meanwhile, these pages will continue to address this crisis—closely, candidly, and with a wrenching sadness tempered by, I pray, the virtues of faith, hope, and charity.

FT

CULTURAL MASOCHISM

The *New Criterion* and Mark Steyn are well matched. The former, edited by Hilton Kramer and Roger Kimball, delivers each month a sophisticated thumb in the eye to the several cultural elites who exuberantly undermine culture in the cause of anti-elitism. Steyn, who, in addition to his contributions to the *New Criterion*, appears regularly in the *London Spectator*, Canada's *National Post*, and almost everywhere else worth reading, wields what may be the most humorously devastating pen in today's culture wars. Kramer and Kimball invited him to be part of their

series on "the survival of culture," and in the course of his contribution on multicultural madnnesses Mr. Steyn illustrates his argument by reference to a strange development that has been discussed from time to time in these pages. Steyn notes that shortly after September 11, a resolution came before Congress to observe "Native American Month." The resolution contained the usual platitudes, and then this: "Native American governments developed the fundamental principles of freedom of speech and separation of powers in government, and these principles form the foundation of the United States Government today." The reference is to the Iroquois Confederation, which, multiculturalists would have us believe, served as the blueprint for the U.S. Constitution. Mr. Steyn then makes the connection to the aforementioned strange development:

"Until relatively recently in Canada, many natives went to 'residential schools' run by the Christian churches on behalf of the federal government. They learned the same things children learned in other schools: there was a map on the wall showing a quarter of the globe colored red for the Queen-Empress' realms; there was Shakespeare and Robert Louis Stevenson, and 'Dr. Livingstone, I presume'; there was not a lot about the Iroquois Confederation. No doubt, as in any other school system, there were a number of randy teachers and sadistic brutes.

"In the Nineties, a few middle-aged alumni came forward to claim they'd been 'abused' while at the residential schools. How did the churches react? Here is Archbishop Michael Peers, the Anglican Primate of Canada, making his first public statement on the matter in 1993: 'I am sorry, more sorry that I can say,' he said, 'that in our schools so many were abused physically, sexually, culturally, emotionally.'

"At that point, there was not one whit of evidence that there was any widespread, systemic physical or sexual abuse in the residential schools. There is still none. But His Grace had lapsed reflexively into a tone that will be all too familiar to anybody who's attended an Anglican service anywhere outside of Africa or the Pacific isles in the last thirty years. In the Sixties, 'Peter Simple,' the great satirist whose work appears in the *Daily Telegraph*, invented a character called Dr. Spacely Trellis, the 'go-ahead Bishop of Bevindon,' whose every sermon on the social issues of the day reached a climax with the words, 'We are all guilty!' Riddled with self-doubt and an enthusiastic pioneer of the peculiar masochism that now afflicts the West, the Anglican Church has for years enjoyed the strange frisson of moral superiority that comes from blanket advertising of one's own failures. It was surely only a matter of time before some litigious types took them at their own estimation.

"So, in the wake of Archbishop Peir's sweeping declaration of his own guilt, more victims spoke up—dozens, hundreds, totaling eventually some fifteen thousand 'survivors' with some five thousand claims of damages. Though none has yet been tested in a court of law, by 1999 the costs of merely responding to the charges were threatening to bankrupt not just the several Protestant and Catholic dioceses but the entirety of both churches throughout Canada. Yet still the clergymen felt it would be bad form to defend themselves. A United Church of Canada employee, John Siebert, spent six years researching the history of residential schools and their impact on native culture and pointed out several helpful facts:

- Native children were not forced to abandon their own beliefs and become Christians; in 1871, before the first residential school ever opened, 96 percent of Canada's Indians identified themselves as either Anglican or Catholic.
- When, over the years, the Federal Government and the churches wanted to close residential schools, it was the Indian bands (the tribal councils) that wanted to keep them open.
- . . . ah, but there's no point even going on. The defendants weren't looking for a defense, only a way to plea-bargain themselves into oblivion.

"So Mr. Seibert's former employers at the UCC wrote to the papers, indignantly dissociating themselves from his position, facts notwithstanding: 'It is the position of the United Church that the national residential schools system was an integral part of a national policy intended to assimilate First Nations people into the dominant Euro-Canadian culture,' they said. 'There are simply too many stories of the pain and cultural loss experienced by survivors of the residential schools system to conclude that this policy and its expression in the residential schools system represents anything but a profound failure in the history of the relationship between First Nations and non-First Nations peoples.' With defendants like this, who needs plaintiffs? The Canadian Government, a codefendant, prepared for an optimistically priced out-of-court settlement of some \$2 billion, split between fifteen thousand 'survivors' of 'crimes' never recognized by any court.

"Nonetheless, 'pain and cultural loss' are categories worth separating. Is it possible even the horniest vicars could sodomize fifteen thousand kids? Well, no. Ninety percent of the claims are for the vaguer offense of

'cultural genocide,' a crime we'll be hearing a lot more of in the future. 'Cultural genocide' is similar to traditional forms of genocide—such as being herded into ovens or hacked to pieces with machetes—but with the happy benefit, from the plaintiff's point of view, that you personally won't have to be killed in order to have a case. All you need are blurry accusations, historical resentments, and a hefty dose of false-memory syndrome. Against craven clerics like the Anglican Church, that's more than enough."

"Craven clerics" may seem somewhat harsh. They understand themselves to be practicing the virtue of sensitivity, which, if it is a virtue worth practicing, is worth practicing to excess, even to excruciating excess. There must be a better word than craven.

FT

AFTER ISRAEL

I remember many years ago being taken aback when at a dinner party a friend concluded her vigorous defense of Israeli policy with the seemingly off-hand remark, "But of course, in the long run, Israel won't survive." When I pressed her, she explained that the Arabs, with such overwhelming numbers, will never be reconciled to the existence of Israel on "their" land. In other words, demography is destiny. It is true that the twenty-two nations of the Arab League have a fast-growing population of 300 million, compared with less than six million in Israel, with more than a million of those being Arabs. The population imbalance will become ever more dramatic, and Israel is such a small sliver of territory in such a vast region. I am no longer surprised when I hear people, including some in positions of considerable influence, say, usually sotto voce, that Israel will not survive "in the long run."

In this connection, I took note of a *Commentary* article by Norman Podhoretz—a more hawkish hawk on Israel than whom is not to be found—in which he argues that there is, in fact, no "peace process" between Israel and the Palestinians. Responding to Podhoretz, Ron Unz, the prominent California businessman and political activist, wrote: "As someone whose grandparents helped found Israel, I felt immense sadness after reading Norman Podhoretz's powerful analysis. There appear to be only two possible outcomes to this conflict. Israel may eventually choose to . . . exterminate or expel Palestinians from Israel and the West Bank. Or the endless bloodshed will produce an accelerating exodus of Israeli Jews to

America and other more peaceful and affluent places, eventually leading to a collapse of the Jewish state. Since I doubt that Israel will ever develop a consensus for killing or expelling millions of Palestinians, I expect the country's trajectory to follow that of the Crusader kingdoms, surviving for seventy or eighty years after its establishment in 1948 and then collapsing under continual Muslim pressure and flagging ideological commitment."

I was even more impressed by Podhoretz's response to Unz: "I do not accept that Israel will wind up as another Crusader kingdom. . . . It would be foolish to dismiss this possibility altogether. . . . But I am still convinced that, if the Israelis can hold on tight against the forces [Unz] specifies, the day may yet come when the Arab world will call off the war it has been waging against the Jewish state since 1948." He agrees that killing or expelling millions of Palestinians is simply not an option. He then goes on to say that much depends on whether the U.S., in its current war against terrorism, treats Israel as a partner rather than an obstacle to its purposes in the Middle East. But there is a wan note to Podhoretz's response to Unz's prognosis: "I do not *accept*. . . . I am *still* convinced . . . *if* the Israelis can . . . the day *may* yet come." And this from the archenemy of any hint of defeatism. I do not say this in criticism of Podhoretz. But it does seem to me that, for the first time in a very long time, there is now an explicitness about—and in some quarters an openness to—the possibility that Israel will not make it, and I find this profoundly troubling.

In Patrick Buchanan's new book, *The Death of the West*, he reports a conversation with former President Richard Nixon, known as a strong supporter of Israel. Buchanan's wife Shelley asked Nixon if Israel will survive. In the long run? he responded. He then turned his hand and put his thumb down. The answer was No.

What would it mean for the future of Judaism and world Jewry (the two are not separable) were the state of Israel to disappear? Of course I do not know. Nobody does. I don't mean what would happen if Israel was obliterated by an Arab atomic bomb, as some Arabs contemplate with relish. I mean, rather, the prospect of Israel being abandoned by Jews as a noble but failed Zionist dream. I suppose it is possible that five million Jews could go elsewhere, mainly to America, and flourish in security. It seems more than possible that a substantial number would, remembering Masada, be determined to die with the dream.

These are grim and unwelcome thoughts. As too many people are eager to remind us, Israel is doing bad things to the Palestinians. And, as too many fail to say, Palestinians are doing bad things to Israelis, and it is not always easy to sort out which is action and which

reaction, which is aggression and which defense. There should be no difficulty, however, in sorting out the difference between the one party that has the declared purpose of destroying or expelling the other party, and the other party that wants only to live in security and peace. This, I think, we know for sure: there could be a real peace process and a real peace if the Arabs believably accepted a sovereign Jewish state in their midst. This, sadly, does not seem to be in the offing. So maybe the present conflict will go on for another five years. Ten years? Sixty years? How long is "the long run"? I may be wrong, but it seems to me that more supporters of Israel are asking that question, and asking it out loud. I'm not sure what should be made of that, but I am sure it is not unimportant.

FT

MAINLINING IN THE BASEMENT

Winston Churchill once observed of Clement Attlee: "He is a modest man, with a great deal to be modest about." There is the appearance of considerable modesty in Charles T. Matthewes' essay in *Theology Today*, "Reconsidering the Role of Mainline Churches in Public Life." Do not be misled by the snappy title. The essay is a low-key reflection on what has happened to oldline Protestantism since the days when the "church and society" bureaucracies of the United Methodists, Presbyterians (USA), United Church of Christ, et al. made public waves with their perpetually prophetic pronouncements styled as "speaking truth to power." Although much reduced, those bureaucracies are still in place, but they are not even mentioned by Mr. Matthewes, who appears to be skirting the embarrassment of their failure by turning it into a virtue.

Matthewes, who teaches religious studies at the University of Virginia, takes as his text a new study by Robert Wuthnow of Princeton, *The Quiet Voice of God: Faith-Based Activism and Mainline Protestantism*. The study finds that "the mainline's typical forms of involvement in civic life and public discourse are multitudinous and subterranean," of the kind that often go unnoticed. The mainline is not "noisy" like the religious right but is "quietly influential." A chief source of its influence is in providing space for numerous civic activities, many of them not "Christianly indexed" (i.e., they are not specifically Christian). By providing space, Mr. Matthewes means, quite literally, providing space, as in letting all kinds of groups meet in their otherwise

empty church facilities. "To place these findings in conversation with Robert Putnam's work on social capital," Matthewes writes, "mainline Protestant church basements may save us from bowling alone." He continues, "Whether or not the public square is 'naked,' as Richard Neuhaus suggested, might depend on whether or not one thinks that church meeting halls are part of the public square."

Church basements are multitudinous and subterranean, and yes, they can be seen as part of the public square, but that is not what I chiefly meant by the public square, nor what oldline Protestantism meant by the public square back in its noisy days before it was forced to take refuge in the conclusion that God's voice is very quiet. The noteworthy item in the Wuthnow-Matthewes view, however, is the suggestion that, whether publicly prominent or publicly ignored, the voice of mainline Protestantism is the voice of God.

Matthewes does not assume that all is well, and he calls for some changes. For instance, for mainliners there needs to be a stronger connection "between what happens on Sunday mornings and what happens during the rest of the week." Connecting Sunday morning with real life: it may not be thinking outside the box, but it's hard to argue with it. Matthewes approves of the idea that the civic order has its own integrity quite apart from any specifically Christian reference, and he cites Martin Luther's famous maxim, "Better to be ruled by a wise Turk than a stupid Christian." (The evidence from exhaustive research is that Luther never said that, but it is certainly what he might have said, if he had thought to say it.) But, Matthewes writes, wise Christians should also participate in politics, and to do so they need a better theological grounding. In that connection he recommends a reappropriation of the thought of the brothers Niebuhr, Reinhold and H. Richard. Back to the future, as it were.

Another suggested source of proposed mainline renewal is identification with the salvific experience of African-Americans. "What if," Matthewes asks, "white people began talking about white people as already burdened (just by being white) with a special 'original sin' of racial privilege?" What if, indeed. I suppose it could have the perverse effect of making white people feel even more special. And mainline white people must already feel very special, what with bearing the burden of being the quiet voice of God in public life and all that. But it appears the mainline has no choice; there is nobody else to take on these burdens. "The two largest alternatives, evangelical Protestantism and Roman Catholicism," Matthewes writes, "cannot replace the mainline churches' historically beneficial effects on civic life."

The evangelicals can't do it because they are "too well integrated in the society to provide much new social capital," and because they are too "political" in what he calls the narrow sense. With that I am simply at a loss. Does he mean that members of the Assemblies of God are more socially established or more at home in American society than, say, Presbyterians? That seems unlikely. As for political action, we have a number of studies showing that evangelicals and their churches tend not to be activist, but when they do act they tend to get noticed, especially by liberals who assume that liberals have a copyright on "speaking truth to power."

Nor are Catholics up to replacing the indispensable mainline. Matthewes writes that, while Catholics provide "much of the intellectual impetus" for public action, "their stronger hierarchical inheritance will be a stumbling block for cultivating the necessary sort of 'republican' civic spirit." Alas, it seems that Alexis de Tocqueville and John Courtney Murray, who argued that Catholicism is particularly well suited to cultivate republican virtue, have lived in vain. Paul Blanshard, thou hast conquered! Mr. Matthewes does allow that Catholics may have a larger role to play in the public square if they become less Catholic and more like mainline Protestants. The author winds down with this: "The mainline 'civic style,' then, remains the most viable form for religious groups to influence American society today and in the foreseeable future, and thus to have some say in the culture that so profoundly affects their lives."

The Mainline Deserves Better

Among many commentaries on the dispiriting spectacle of establishment Protestantism's decline from the mainline to the oldline to the sideline, Mr. Matthewes' is notably depressing. There is a continuity in the story, however, and it is to be found in the mainline's abiding smugness. The appearance of modesty is misleading, even though there is today so very much for the mainline to be modest about. From the late-nineteenth-century social gospel crusade aimed at "Christianizing America and Americanizing Christianity," through the modernist triumph over fundamentalism in the 1920s, through the faux-prophetic radicalisms of the 1960s and consequent marginalization, mainline Protestantism has never doubted that it speaks for God. It's only that now God is speaking very quietly. In the church basement. Through voices that are not necessarily "Christianly indexed."

Joshing aside, oldline Protestantism and its place in our public life is an important subject. And it is true, as the prophet Elijah learned, that God sometimes does

speak in “a still, small voice.” There are many voices in American Christianity, and none should assume that it is the voice of God. The most theologically confident and publicly effective voices today are evangelical Protestant and Catholic. The cultural and political hegemony of the old mainline has long since collapsed. This does not mean that the mainline has collapsed. While national and regional structures may be largely ignored, while church and society bureaucracies may be discredited, and while cooperative efforts such as the National Council of Churches are only waiting for a date to be set for their funeral, it is worth remembering that approximately one-third of the Christians in this country still belong to local churches associated with the old mainline. And across the country one can find oldline congregations that are vibrantly alive in their very specifically Christian faith and mission.

“Reconsidering the Role of Mainline Churches in Public Life” is a good thing to do. But it is not helpful when done as a nostalgic exercise in the afterglow of a hegemony long lost, or as a desperate grasp for moral legitimacy in identification with black victimhood, or by the smug equation of its voice with the voice of God, or on the anti-ecumenical and thoroughly sectarian premise that its identity is derived from invidious comparison with evangelicals and Catholics. The churches that are heirs to what was once the mainline are deserving of better than that.

FT

PLAIN TALK ABOUT “MUSLIM RAGE”

We are told by President Bush that the overthrow of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan is just the beginning of the war on terrorism. Yet I am struck by how many pundits and news reports give the impression that that was an isolated action; all that is left is a clean-up operation and then it's back to the world as usual. Our December 2001 editorial, “In a Time of War,” asserted that, whatever happens next, power relationships in the world have already been dramatically reconfigured by September 11. At the center of that reconfiguration is Islam, as a religion and a culture. In that editorial, we cited Bernard Lewis, doyen of Western students of Islam, on how the resentment and rage of most of the billion Muslims in the world came to be targeted on the United States. Many Middle East “experts” and those who teach in Islamic studies departments in this

country have been telling us for a long time, and continue to tell us, that the “Muslim problem” is really the “American problem”; that terrorism is, if not excusable, at least understandable in view of the nasty things we have done to Muslims, and especially to Arab Muslims.

Of course, it is always imperative to work at better understanding, to clear up misunderstandings, to build bridges, and even, if possible, replace conflict with peaceful dialogue. Such were the aims of Pope John Paul II with his January 24 gathering of world religious leaders at Assisi. Such efforts, no matter how futile they may sometimes seem, are to be wholeheartedly and prayerfully supported. It is absolutely necessary that de-politicized space be created for conversation about, and mutual recognition of, our common humanity and our accountability to a judgment that transcends our animosities and clashes. In no way should such efforts be dismissed as soft, idealistic, or utopian. “How many divisions does the pope have?” Stalin cynically asked. Those who did not know the answer before were amply instructed by the fall of Soviet communism. In politics among nations, as everywhere else, it is a crackpot “realism” that derides the importance of culture and ideas, and especially the commanding ideas associated with religion.

It is precisely in order to achieve peaceful understanding that we need plain talk about what stands in the way of such understanding. Victor Davis Hanson, a military historian and foreign policy analyst, provides such plain talk in “Why the Muslims Misjudged Us” (*City Journal*, Winter 2002). “The catastrophe of the Muslim world,” he writes, is that its leadership recognizes the failure of their societies but then “seeks to fault others for its own self-created fiasco. Government spokesmen in the Middle East should ignore the nonsense of the cultural relativists and discredited Marxists and have the courage to say that they are poor because their populations are nearly half illiterate, that their governments are not free, that their economies are not open, and that their fundamentalists impede scientific inquiry, unpopular expression, and cultural exchange.” Chances for better understanding are now much reduced. “Tragically, the immediate prospects for improvement are dismal, inasmuch as the war against terrorism has further isolated the Middle East. Travel, foreign education, and academic exchanges, the only sources of future hope for the Arab world, have screeched to a halt. All the conferences in Cairo about Western bias and media distortion cannot hide this self-inflicted catastrophe and the growing ostracism and suspicion of Middle Easterners in the West.”

Muslim autocrats make threatening noises about the dire consequences for the West if they are provoked. Hanson writes: "There is an abyss between such rhetoric and the world we actually live in, an abyss called power. Out of politeness, we needn't crow over the relative military capability of one billion Muslims and 300 million Americans; but we should remember that the lethal 2,500-year Western way of war is the reflection of very different ideas about personal freedom, civic militarism, individuality on the battlefield, military technology, logistics, decisive battle, group discipline, civilian audit, and the dissemination and proliferation of knowledge." Hanson is undoubtedly right about that, although the potential destructive power of terrorism is, by definition, in its indifference to the "Western way of war."

One-Way Copying

Here is how he depicts the larger picture: "Values and traditions—not guns, germs, and steel—explain why a tiny Greece of fifty thousand square miles crushed a Persia twenty times larger; why Rome, not Carthage, created world government; why Cortes was in Tenochtitlán, and Montezuma not in Barcelona; why gunpowder in its home in China was a pastime for the elite while, when stolen and brought to Europe, it became a deadly and ever evolving weapon of the masses. Even at the nadir of Western power in the medieval ages, a Europe divided by religion and fragmented into feudal states could still send thousands of thugs into the Holy Land, while a supposedly ascendant Islam had neither the ships nor the skill nor the logistics to wage jihad in Scotland or Brittany. Much is made of five hundred years of Ottoman dominance over a feuding Orthodox, Christian, and Protestant West; but the sultans were powerful largely to the degree that they crafted alliances with a distrustful France and the warring Italian city-states, copied the Arsenal at Venice, turned out replicas of Italian and German cannon, and moved their capital to European Constantinople. Moreover, their dominance amounted only to a rough naval parity with the West on the old Roman Mediterranean; they never came close to the conquest of the heart of Western Europe." That rings true, except for their never coming close. At least at the time, both Christians and Muslims thought the confrontation leading up to Vienna 1683 was a very close-run thing.

Today, however, it is a matter, above all, of culture. "We are militarily strong, and the Arab world abjectly weak, not because of greater courage, superior numbers, higher IQs, more ores, or better weather, but

because of our culture. When it comes to war, one billion people and the world's oil are not nearly as valuable military assets as MIT, West Point, the U.S. House of Representatives, C-Span, Bill O'Reilly, and the GI Bill. Between Xerxes on his peacock throne overlooking Salamis and Saddam on his balcony reviewing his troops, between the Greeks arguing and debating before they rowed out with Themistocles and the Americans haranguing one another on the eve of the Gulf War, lies a 2,500-year tradition that explains why the rest of the world copies its weapons, uniforms, and military organization from us, not vice versa."

If Israel Did Not Exist . . .

Also in this country, there are many who claim that Israel is at the heart of this confrontation. Much more is that the claim in the Middle East. "Millions in the Middle East are obsessed with Israel, whether they live in sight of Tel Aviv or thousands of miles away. Their fury doesn't spring solely from genuine dismay over the hundreds of Muslims Israel has killed on the West Bank; after all, Saddam Hussein butchered hundreds of thousands of Shiites, Kurds, and Iranians, while few in Cairo or Damascus said a word. Syria's Assad liquidated perhaps twenty thousand in sight of Israel, without a single demonstration in any Arab capital. The murder of some 100,000 Muslims in Algeria and 40,000 in Chechnya in the last decade provoked few intellectuals in the Middle East to call for a pan-Islamic protest. Clearly, the anger derives not from the tragic tally of the fallen but from Islamic rage that Israelis have defeated Muslims on the battlefield repeatedly, decisively, at will, and without modesty. If Israel were not so successful, free, and haughty, if it were beleaguered and tottering on the verge of ruin, perhaps it would be tolerated. But in a sea of totalitarianism and government-induced poverty, a relatively successful economy and a stable culture arising out of scrub and desert clearly irks its less successful neighbors. Envy, as the historian Thucydides reminds us, is a powerful emotion and has caused not a few wars.

"If Israel did not exist, the Arab world, in its current fit of denial, would have to invent something like it to vent its frustrations. That is not to say there may not be legitimate concerns in the struggle over Palestine, but merely that for millions of Muslims the fight over such small real estate stems from a deep psychological wound. It isn't about lebensraum or some actual physical threat. Israel is a constant reminder that it is a nation's culture—not its geography or size or magnitude of its oil reserves—that determines its wealth or freedom. For the Middle East to make peace with Israel would be to declare war on itself, to admit

that its own fundamental way of doing business—not the Jews—makes it poor, sick, and weak.”

As for the U.S., its financial aid to Israel has to be weighed against the many billions of dollars that go to the Palestinians, Egypt, Jordan, and other Muslim countries. In addition, there is this: “Far from egging on Israel, the United States actually restrains the Israeli military, whose organization and discipline, along with the sophisticated Israeli arms industry, make it quite capable of annihilating nearly all its bellicose neighbors without American aid. Should the United States withdraw from active participation in the Middle East and let the contestants settle their differences on the battlefield, Israel, not the Arab world, would win. The military record of four previous conflicts does not lie. Arafat should remember who saved him in Lebanon; it was no power in the Middle East that brokered his exodus and parted the waves of Israeli planes and tanks for his safe passage to the desert.”

Loving What They Hate

We will remember what too many Muslims forget, writes Hanson. “The Muslim world suffers from political amnesia, we now have learned, and so has forgotten not only Arafat’s resurrection but also American help to beleaguered Afghanis, terrified Kuwaitis, helpless Kurds and Shiites, starving Somalis, and defenseless Bosnians—direct intervention that has cost the United States much more treasure and lives than mere economic aid for Israel ever did. They forget; but we remember the Palestinians cheering in Nablus hours after thousands of our innocents were incinerated in New York and the hagiographic posters of a mass murderer in the streets of Muslim capitals.”

“Even in the crucible of war,” Hanson writes, “we have discovered that our worst critics love us in the concrete as much as they hate us in the abstract.” The concrete evidence of their love, if that is what it is, is that they want to come here and to send their children here. Hanson asks, “Why do so many of these anti-Americans, who profess hatred of the West and reverence for the purity of an energized Islam or a fiery Palestine, enroll in Chico State or UCLA instead of *madrassas* in Pakistan or military academies in Iraq? The embarrassing answer would explain nearly everything, from bin Laden to the intifada. Dads and moms who watch Al-Jazeera and scream in the street at the Great Satan really would prefer that their children have dollars, an annual CAT scan, a good lawyer, air conditioning, and Levis in American hell than be without toilet paper, suffer from intestinal parasites, deal with the secret police, and squint with uncorrected vision in the Islamic paradise of Cairo, Teheran, and Gaza. Such a fundamental and

intolerable paradox in the very core of a man’s heart—multiplied millions of times over—is not a healthy thing either for them or for us.”

Hanson ends on the note of friendly counsel: “So a neighborly bit of advice for our Islamic friends and their spokesmen abroad: topple your pillars of ignorance and the edifice of your anti-Americanism. Try to seek difficult answers from within to even more difficult questions without. Do not blame others for problems that are largely self-created or seek solutions over here when your answers are mostly at home. Please, think hard about what you are saying and writing about the deaths of thousands of Americans and your relationship with the United States. America has been a friend more often than not to you. But now you are on the verge of turning its people—who create, not follow, government—into an enemy: a very angry and powerful enemy that may be yours for a long, long time to come.”

I’m sure that some might complain that Hanson’s critique of Muslim venting is but another form of venting. I don’t think so. I am reminded, rather, of Dr. Johnson’s observation that clear thinking begins with clearing the mind of cant. The reconfiguration of world politics since September 11 offers nought for our comfort. Almost unbelievable has been the obtuseness and mendacity of Muslim organizations in this country. They continue to act as though nothing fundamental has changed; they are just another poor minority being picked on by a prejudiced majority. Because of the incorrigible niceness of Americans, they can get away with that most of the time. But continued denials and evasions about the evils perpetrated in the name of Islam and of Muslims seem almost suicidal. Again and again, one wants to cry out, “Please, please do not say that.” They keep digging themselves into an ever deeper hole. We must continue to hope that voices of candor and correction will emerge from the Muslim world, both here and abroad. Meanwhile, I think Hanson got it about right in explaining why they misjudge us, and why we must brace ourselves for the duration, which is likely to be very, very long.

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THE USES OF CONFRONTATION

I first met the late Saul Alinsky when I was a very young pastor in black Brooklyn. It was at the Urban Institute in Chicago, which in the 1960s was at the

center of honing young clergy, Protestant and Catholic, for urban ministries. Alinsky was already then a fabled veteran of confrontational activism, an amiably rough man who was loquaciously exultant in communicating his discovery that the Catholic Church was the lever with which to move the world, or, as it was put then, to radically change The System. The Catholics had the resources and the people, while Protestant clergy, with usually dwindling city parishes, had the time and energy for agitation. In that first meeting, there were perhaps thirty younger clergy and seminarians in the room. Alinsky began with this: "If there's anybody here who has any ideas about becoming a bishop some day, he should leave right now." I was impressed.

Alinsky's books *Reveille for Radicals* and *Rules for Radicals* were hot items in their time. His lasting contribution is the Industrial Areas Foundation, which is still going strong today. IAF recruits local churches to challenge "the power structure" on behalf of radical change by "pitting power against power." Power is, as IAF organizers unabashedly proclaim, the only game in town. (A good introduction to IAF goals and tactics, written from an admiring perspective, is Jim Rooney's *Organizing the South Bronx*, available in paperback from State University of New York Press.) IAF is reported to have more than sixty-five affiliated organizations around the country, and claims to represent, through its affiliates, millions of people. In its boot camps for organizers, IAF prides itself on taking an unsentimental and brutally realistic approach to the power struggle. The purpose is to "wean church people off the conventional religious expectation" that their role is to achieve dialogue and cooperation. The goal is to win, and the means is confrontation and conflict. The tactic, as Rooney explains, is to unambiguously target a vulnerable public official or an institution as "the enemy," to very publicly defeat the enemy, and then build on the momentum to attack the next vulnerable target.

The IAF approach is very political and unapologetically partisan. IAF as an organization usually keeps a low profile. It has, for instance, no website, although it is the directing force behind coalitions such as BUILD in Baltimore, WIN in Washington, D.C., and numerous similar campaigns. South Bronx Churches (SBC) is among affiliates that have an impressive record in marshaling public and private resources for low-income housing, although not without stepping on the toes of a Catholic urban coalition that it upstaged. Stepping on toes, indeed stomping on toes, is the ordinary operating procedure for IAF and its affiliates. Critics of IAF say it is "divisive" and has the unhappy effect of "politicizing" churches,

to which IAF leaders happily plead guilty. Readers of Tom Wolfe's *Bonfire of the Vanities* will remember his account of the riotous mass mugging of New York's mayor (a stand-in for Ed Koch), a classic IAF-style confrontation. At the same time, and I have some ambivalence about this, IAF leaders have said they are promoting the "mediating institutions" approach to public policy advocated by Peter Berger and me in our *To Empower People*.

Over the years, readers have asked about IAF, usually occasioned by the involvement or proposed involvement of their local churches. My standard response has been that I have known IAF leaders, on and off, over many years, that they do have a heart for creating leaders for sometimes necessary social change, but that intention is joined to a manipulative methodology and a tendency to use religion for narrowly partisan purposes. In short: look very carefully at what you may be getting into. One reader, Edward H. Sisson, a Washington lawyer, has looked very carefully indeed and does not at all like what he has found. He was a member of the vestry of St. John's Episcopal Church in Bethesda, Maryland, when that parish was invited to join an IAF affiliate known as Action in Montgomery (AIM). After his investigation of IAF's history and methods, he strongly opposed joining. He is willing to make the very substantial file he accumulated on IAF available to readers who send him \$20 (for duplication and mailing costs) at 555 Twelfth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004. In my judgment, the material raises substantial questions that should be considered by any church thinking about signing up with an IAF project.

Saul Alinsky died many years ago. In the 1960s he was viewed as part of a mainly Jewish world of the Old Left dating from the 1930s. Some leftists committed to a Marxist version of class struggle condemned him as a dangerous revisionist. Then and now, IAF cannot always be easily slotted on the left-right spectrum. The problems, including moral problems, arise in connection with recruiting religion to a methodology of unrelenting confrontation, deliberate polarization, targeting of "enemies," and obsession with power. But, it is said, it is all in a good cause. Maybe so. A Lutheran pastor who is a friend of long standing has worked with IAF for decades. "Sure we use tough street talk to rouse the people and get the attention of the establishment," he says, "but the most effective and most devout Christian leaders I know have come out of this program." Such testimonies are not hard to come by, and they, too, should be weighed by churches thinking about joining up with IAF.

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VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

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RELIGION & INVESTING

April 6, 2002

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Dr. Margaret Blair
Georgetown Law Center

William M. Cunningham
The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Joseph V. DelRaso
Pepper Hamilton

Dr. Mark Graham
Villanova University

Dr. Samuel Gregg
*The Acton Institute for the Study
of Religion and Liberty*

Chad Horning, CFA
*MMA Praxis Mutual Funds
(Anabaptist/Mennonite)*

Dr. Robert Kennedy
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National Catholic Community Foundation

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5.5 substantive Pennsylvania and 5.6 substantive Delaware
CLE credits are available for those attending the program.

WHILE WE'RE AT IT

■ Playing fast and loose with fasting would seem to be another instance of what is aptly described as the “destabilizing” of the Catholic ethos. The bar has been so lowered that what officially counts as fasting today is tantamount to a moderate and well-balanced diet. That is not what the Scriptures or the fathers meant by fasting: a rigorous self-discipline whereby appetites are brought under control in order to sharpen prayerful adhesion to God. But here is a Lenten reflection from the bishops’ Secretariat for Liturgy announcing that “Lenten fasting can encompass fasting from food, sin, ignorance, violence, and apathy.” Really? Fasting from ignorance? We read, “Lent is a time to fast from violence and to witness ‘the peace the world cannot give.’” We are encouraged to ask, “Do I avoid not just the violence of hands, but also the cruel words born of angry hearts, the thoughtless gossip,” etc., etc. So if one does not commit adultery, is he fasting from adultery? This is impossibly muddled. Fasting is not refusing to do bad things but the spiritually purposeful giving up of good things. Like food. Once upon a time, everybody knew that. Many still do. Little thanks to the professional destabilizers.

■ The professor from Nowhere strikes again. More than two billion dollars have been raised for victims of September 11. Private gifts, combined with various government programs, will result in some families getting more than a million dollars. Peter Singer of Princeton writes in *Slate*, “Questions of justice immediately arise.” Ah ha! One would expect no less from the gimlet-eyed professor whom some call the most influential living philosopher in the world. He goes on to offer a typically utilitarian consideration: “It makes sense for the community to reward the families of those who die while bravely trying to save others, for doing so both recognizes and encourages acts of great benefit to the community.” But then he gets to his main complaint: that more people in the world die of hunger every day than died on September 11, and the U.S. is, compared to other nations, a piker when it comes to the percentage of wealth given to world organizations dealing with economic development. Singer ends with this: “Americans are fond of talking of their belief in human equality, but it seems that their circle of concern drops off sharply once it gets to the boundary of their own nation. The sums donated to the victims of Sept. 11 show this once again. We would be a better nation if our generosity was more closely related to need and less closely tied to whether someone is a fellow citizen, or a victim of terrorism, or even a hero.” Well, yes, in the utilitarian Nowhere

where each counts as one and none counts as more than one, that makes a kind of sense. Perhaps there are people who would say, “I see where three thousand people died in New York because of a terrorist attack. But twenty-seven thousand children died of hunger in poor countries the same day. So I’ll give five dollars to a fund for the New York victims and fifty dollars to UNICEF. On second thought, since the victims in New York are already dead and not much can be done for them, and since others will give generously to their survivors, I’ll give all my money to hungry children who might still be helped.” Singer himself, in a brief touch-down in Somewhere, offered the thin utilitarian justification of rewarding and thus encouraging acts that benefit the community. He seems impervious, however, to the fact that most Americans, with good reason, do not share his naive confidence in international organizations that claim to help the poor, and he is only slightly more appreciative of the fact that billions of dollars and thousands of American lives are devoted to helping the poor in other countries, usually under religious auspices. Most dreadfully predictable, however, is Singer’s almost total lack of understanding or sympathy for the very human phenomenon of a great outburst of generosity in response to the unprecedented attack of September 11. Such a response is not logical, it does not conform to a utilitarian calculus of distributive judgment. And of course he is right. I have noted before Chesterton’s observation that the problem with madmen (including mad ethicists) is not that they are not logical but that they are only logical. Extending people’s concerns for others in need is a very good thing to do, but it is not likely to be accomplished by churlish complaints about uncalculated generosity or by the guilting to which Prof. Singer is prone. Much wiser is the celebration of the generous response to September 11, in the hope that generosity breeds generosity all around.

■ “The His-and-Hers Bible” is Emily Nussbaum’s response to the brouhaha over *Today’s New International Version* of the Bible. Writing in the *New York Times Magazine*, Nussbaum concludes: “To translate the Bible this way is understandably tempting, but it’s also a lie. I’m reminded of a modern Orthodox coworker I once had, who said, ‘Look, being Jewish is a game with a set of rules: go ahead and move the pieces anyplace you want, but don’t call it chess.’ A truly gender-neutral interpretation of the Bible would quickly begin to fall apart at the seams—laws about rape or slavery rising up like invisible ink from ancient parchment. One solution, of course, is to reject the Bible entirely. Another is to regard it merely as a parable whose historical foundation can be ignored. But for anyone

who wants to take religion seriously, neither solution truly suits. Instead, it seems necessary to confront the contradictions in the text—to keep the pronouns as they are and wrestle instead with the messy truth, like, well, manly Jacob with his angel. It's a more difficult task, but it's the only honest way out." A friend cautions me that conservatives who count Ms. Nussbaum as an ally in the Bible-translation wars should know that she also runs a soft-porn website. On the other hand, that may simply be evidence of her expertise in wrestling with contradiction.

■ With shrinking membership and influence, the mainline/oldline Protestant denominations are also running into trouble with their publishing houses. Westminster/John Knox (Presbyterian) is a merger of two houses, as is Augsburg Fortress (ELCA Lutheran). Along with Pilgrim (United Church of Christ) and the United Methodist Publishing House, which includes the Abingdon imprint, they are searching for a more profitable "niche." Augsburg Fortress announced losses of \$4 million for the first three quarters of 2001, and has sharply cut back on staff. A common explanation is that these houses are in trouble because they no longer serve the denominations to which they belong, while others claim that the larger problem is that the denominations have so lost touch with what made them distinctive that nobody knows what a Methodist, or Lutheran, or Presbyterian "niche" might look like. In this view, a generalized Protestantism—defined by little other than liberal leanings and not being Catholic or Orthodox—simply cannot sustain inherited denominational institutions, including publishing houses.

■ For eighty years, the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (a.k.a. Jehovah's Witnesses) raged first against the League of Nations and then against the United Nations as the "Great Babylon" predicted in the Book of Revelation. A British journalist reported in passing that, in fact, since 1991 the organization has been a fully accredited nongovernmental organization at the UN, which means it had to subscribe to the UN charter and agree to publicize its objectives. The revelation sparked a storm of protests from Witnesses, and the group has broken off its ten-year fling with the Great Babylon. While on the Witnesses, you may have seen from time to time press references to the group as "the fastest growing Christian denomination in America," just as there are frequent references to Islam as "the fastest growing religion in America." Both are instances of hype. There are about 990,000 Witnesses in America. Despite their aggressive recruitment programs, the number of people leaving by the back door has kept the membership at that level

for many years. The fastest growing religious community in America, Christian or otherwise, is the Catholic Church, at sixty-three million and counting.

■ The celebration of pseudo-pluralism by the champions of "multi-religious America" is aimed at, among other things, expunging from public life explicit religious faith. See, for a particularly egregious example, Diana Eck's *A New Religious America* ("One Nation Under Many Gods," Public Square, October 2001). Then there is the usually sensible "Houses of Worship" section of the *Wall Street Journal* plumping for the "Jewish-Christian-Islamic tradition." It includes the tattered claim—this time by Stephen Prothero of Boston University—that Islam is "the fastest growing religion in the U.S." Professor Barry Kosmin of City University of New York, one of the most careful and respected authorities on religious demographics, concludes that there are probably fewer than two million Muslims in the country. According to Kosmin and his colleagues, the best estimate is that African-Americans are about one-quarter of that two million. He notes in passing that Muslims are under 2 percent of the black population, while 6 percent of blacks are Catholics. Eck and others peddle their version of "religious pluralism" in explicit opposition to the idea of "Christian America." There are, as we have often discussed in these pages, many problems with the idea of Christian America. Denying the demographic reality of Christian America, however, is not a good way of addressing those problems.

■ Clear thinking on the much muddled question of homosexuality is rare, but that is what is offered by Paul Campos, law professor at the University of Colorado. The Rev. Scott Landis, pastor of a fashionable Congregationalist church in Denver and father of three children, announced to his congregation that he is gay and is terminating his marriage. This met with a standing ovation and an outpouring of "love and compassion" that was exuberantly reported in the *Denver Post*. Prof. Campos, writing in the *Rocky Mountain News*, is not quite so certain: "Now the interesting question is, why? We can be sure that if the Rev. Landis had announced to his congregants that he was dumping his wife for the twenty-year-old daughter of one of their number, their reaction would not have been to stand and cheer. Yet surely having an enduring sexual preference for twenty-year-old women is something many a middle-aged man finds he was born with. That biological fact does not excuse him from his social and moral obligations. Why then is the Rev. Landis' choice treated as an instance of something like heroism? The answer, of course, is that the reverend's renunciation of his marriage vows can be shoved

through the moral laundromat of identity politics. His desires can be attached to a term (being 'gay') that magically transforms his infidelity into a species of self-actualization. As there is no analogous term for the middle-aged reverend who manages to achieve self-actualization with the daughter of his neighbor's wife (actually there is, but it's not the sort of term one would use as the basis for a political interest group), the latter divine will be out of luck if he should be so imprudent as to turn to his congregants for 'love and acceptance.' Like all analogies, this one isn't exact. A man who has either been consciously suppressing or unconsciously repressing a desire for other men is not in exactly the same situation as an older man who finds that as he ages his desire for young women does not alter nearly as quickly as his age. But he is in a similar situation. The notion that something as psychologically and morally complex as sexual desire fits into neat little boxes labeled 'straight' or 'gay' serves the interests of the mainstream gay rights movement, and it certainly serves the interests of those who seek absolution at the confessional of identity politics. But things aren't quite that simple. Matters of the heart never are."

■ According to a study conducted by City University of New York and published in the *Jewish Week*, 1.4 million Jews say they are Jewish by birth but now identify with another faith, usually Christianity. That's about one-quarter of the Jewish population of the U.S. Another quarter say they are secular and have no religion, leaving 51 percent of Jews in America claiming Judaism as their religion.

■ College and graduate students, along with young professionals, are invited to sign up for the John Paul II Roundtable in connection with World Youth Day events in Toronto at the end of July. The Roundtable is sponsored by a feisty new group, the World Youth Alliance, and features lectures, small group discussions, and other lively exchanges on life issues, the dignity of the person, and Catholic doctrine on what makes for a free and just society. The Roundtable is scheduled for July 25, 2002, and speakers will include, among others, George Weigel, author of *Witness to Hope: The Biography of John Paul II*, and Father Robert Sirico of the Acton Institute. I've agreed to moderate all this, moderate that I am, and am supposed to make a presentation as well. I expect it will be very instructive fun, and edifying to boot. If you're interested in participating, mail a résumé and a 250-word statement on how your interests and work relate to Catholic social doctrine to Melinda Mounsey, World Youth Alliance, 847A Second Avenue, #502, New York, New York 10017, or visit www.worldyouthalliance.org.

■ The *Times Literary Supplement* is coming up on its hundredth birthday and congratulations are in order. Derwent May has written a book for the occasion, *Critical Times*, which is reviewed by Joseph Epstein in, of course, the *TLS*. Bruce Richmond was the first editor, and Epstein writes that "no paper over the past century has done more than the *TLS*, in Bruce Richmond's phrase, to 'irradiate the humanities.' It has been unrelenting in its insistence on a high standard of scholarship and on the primacy and autonomy of culture. As Alan Pryce-Jones once put it, in another connection, the *TLS* is for those who 'find themselves looking at pictures, hearing music, reading in other languages, traveling, correlating as far as possible the whole plan of civilization in which the English faculty at a university occupies only one corner.'" Epstein concludes that the *TLS* is "the perfect paper for the serious dilettante," which he readily admits to being. About half the circulation of the *TLS* is outside the UK, with most of that being in the U.S. Our academic and intellectual life (the two being by no means the same thing) would be greatly improved—in my judgment and, I expect, in Epstein's—were the *TLS* to have as many readers here as does, for obvious instance, the *New York Review of Books*. If, as seems possible, there are to be another hundred years, may they not be unaccompanied by the *TLS*.

■ In the fall of 2000, Michael Bellesiles' book *Arming America: The Origins of a National Gun Culture* was greeted with high praise by influential reviewers such as Garry Wills and Edmund Morgan. Also by John Wilson, editor of the evangelical *Books & Culture*, who thought the book deserved a Pulitzer Prize. Bellesiles' chief claim, that guns were much less common in early America than is generally thought, understandably pleased those in favor of gun control. Then things got interesting. A number of serious historians, joined by Second Amendment activists, began to dig into Bellesiles' alleged sources and discovered that he had skewed, twisted, and simply fabricated evidence on which his argument rested. Emory University, where he teaches, asked for an explanation and he eventually produced one. Of that explanation Wilson gingerly says, "It was a great disappointment to those who held out hope that he might still mount a credible defense." Obviously, Wilson, who says he has no ax to grind in the debate over gun control, was among the disappointed. Wilson concludes his reflection on this unhappy affair with this: "Some have said that whatever the flaws of *Arming America*, the book has opened up a productive debate. Perhaps, though that remains to be seen. As for Bellesiles himself, the future is unclear, but it seems likely that ultimately his career will be ruined. That is the saddest aspect of this whole

episode.” There are several things not quite right about that. What might such a “productive debate” be about? Certainly not about the merits of gun control, since the Bellesiles affair can only be powerful ammunition for the gun rights folk in claiming that their opponents deal in gross mendacities. As for Bellesiles’ career as a historian, it is not likely that it will ultimately be ruined; it is ruined now. And why is that “the saddest aspect of this whole episode”? Maybe Mr. Wilson says that because he does not wish to sound as though he is personally whining about the sadness of being taken in by Bellesiles’ fraud. That is understandable, even commendable. But the saddest aspect of all this is that a historian would commit fraud on such a grand scale, and that so many distinguished academics, either through carelessness or political bias, were complicit in promoting his fraud. (The book won the coveted Bancroft Prize in history.) I do not wish to sound unfeeling, but it is not sad at all, in fact it is deeply gratifying, that Mr. Bellesiles was found out and has been punished by the termination of his career as a historian. That is called justice, and getting straight the emotions appropriate to seeing justice done is part of the work of moral clarity. I am sure that Mr. Wilson did not mean to say that Bellesiles’ career should not be ruined, or at least so severely damaged as to require credible repentance and years of penitential labor before it is rehabilitated.

■ There is a welcome increase in resources dealing with same-sex attraction, appropriate therapy, and how churches and other groups can be of help. For one fine example, the Catholic Medical Association has put out a thirty-page document, *Homosexuality and Hope*. It is available by calling toll-free 1-877-CathDoc, or it can be downloaded at www.cathmed.org.

■ The Rev. Alexander C. Wilson of Cabot, Pennsylvania, has served small, medium-sized, and large Protestant congregations. The following item appeared here a while back: “The Barna Research Group telephoned 3,764 Protestant churches nationwide and in 40 percent of the calls was not able to get through to anyone, even after calling back as many as twelve times. Half of the churches in the 40 percent did not even have an answering machine. Schedule your crises for eleven o’clock Sunday morning.” On which the Rev. Wilson offers this reflection: “Barna does not realize how many Protestant churches have less than fifty members. About 40 percent of them are under seventy-five members. Many of these small churches have only a part-time pastor, often a lay pastor with another full-time job. There is no secretary on duty to answer the phone. An answering machine? Everyone in the

community knows how to get in touch with the pastor or the leaders of the church. In most small communities there is a network of knowledge of need that works superbly. If someone is injured, or in the hospital, or had a fire, within twenty-four hours everyone knows about it, and help is supplied. Answering machines can’t do that. Many small church buildings have a telephone for use only in emergencies, either an emergency at the church, or in the home of someone who is at the church. Our small churches are splendidly efficient at meeting emergencies, usually far better than large churches. . . . Don’t put down the small and effective churches because they don’t have answering machines. They don’t need them. People know where to go to get help. And usually, they don’t have to ask for it. Small churches don’t wait for meetings. The communication of need and the response of love does not depend on machinery.” I wish I had said that.

■ Despite the catalogue blurb, we might be giving some review attention to *Heidegger’s Atheism* by Laurence Paul Hemming. The catalogue says, “Hemming argues [that] Heidegger’s atheism is an implicit critique of theology.” Ah, so, as Charlie Chan might have said.

■ Samuel Huntington is a piker with only eight “cultural constellations” that figure in his *Clash of Civilizations*. David Barrett’s *World Christian Encyclopedia* (Oxford University Press) lists 12,600 cultures of the world in what he calls the Ethnosphere. Barrett and his colleagues have done a most ambitious thing, and a most difficult thing, in trying to sum up the maddeningly diverse state of Christianity in the world, especially since, among Christian groups claiming the greatest growth, statistics are often a matter of enthusiastically inspired guesstimates. One among many statistics that stands out is that in 1981 there were 20,800 denominations, while today there are 34,000. Of course many of these are in the “Independent” category and are post-denominational and pentecostal groups consisting of only one congregation. The Independent category, however, accounts for 27.7 percent of the world’s Christians and 38 percent of the world’s full-time Christian workers. The prayer *Ut unum sint* (that they may all be one) would, it seems, require an ever greater measure of faith.

■ All of a sudden it is proposed as the received wisdom that T. S. Eliot was homosexual. The *Times Literary Supplement* cites several instances of commentators stating it as though it were a well-known fact, and I’ve seen a couple of such references

also on this side of the water. In his authoritative *T. S. Eliot*, Peter Ackroyd writes: "It would be the tritest form of reductionism to assume that Eliot, because he could not adequately deal with female sexuality, was therefore homosexual." That's on page 310, in the event you need the reference when you run into someone who confidently states "what everybody knows" about the sexuality of Eliot.

■ Parse this: "We should not allow theology, philosophy, or politics to interfere with the decision we make on this issue." That's Congressman Ted Strickland of Ohio insisting that the question of human cloning should be guided solely by the best available science. But how are *we* to make a decision if the decision is made by science? And who is this fellow Science who makes decisions? Francis Fukuyama writes in the *Public Interest*, "It is only 'theology, philosophy, or politics' that can establish the ends of science and technology. Scientists may help to establish moral rules concerning their own conduct, but they do so not as scientists but as scientifically informed members of a broader political community." Fukuyama is a member of the President's Council on Bioethics and he insists that "the march of biotechnology is not an unstoppable juggernaut." He cites a wide range of instances in which we more or less effectively regulate science and technology, such as nuclear weapons, chemical warfare, replacement human body parts, and various drugs. He opposes the libertarian doctrine that defines freedom exclusively in terms of people—whether parents wanting designer children, scientists playing with the creation of new species, or entrepreneurs in search of very big bucks—doing what they want. Fukuyama writes: "But this kind of freedom will be different from all other freedoms that people have previously enjoyed. Political freedom has heretofore meant the freedom to pursue those ends that our natures had established for us. Those ends are not rigidly determined; human nature is very plastic, and we have an enormous range of choices conformable with that nature. But it is not infinitely malleable, and the elements that remain constant—particularly our species-typical gamut of emotional responses—constitute a safe harbor that allows us to connect, potentially, with all other human beings. It may be that we are somehow destined to take up this new kind of freedom, or that the next stage of evolution is one in which, as some have suggested, we will deliberately take charge of our own biological makeup rather than leaving it to the blind forces of natural selection. But if we do, we should do it with our eyes open. Many assume that the posthuman world will look pretty much like our own—free, equal, prosperous, caring, compassionate—only

with better health care, longer lives, and perhaps higher levels of intelligence than today. But the posthuman world could be one that is far more hierarchical and competitive than the one that currently exists, and full of social conflict as a result. It could be one in which any notion of shared humanity is lost, because we have mixed human genes with those of so many other species that we no longer have a clear idea of what a human being is. It could be one in which the average person is living well into his or her second century, sitting in a nursing home hoping for an unattainable death. Or it could be the kind of soft tyranny envisioned in *Brave New World*, in which everyone is healthy and happy but has forgotten the meaning of hope, fear, or struggle. We do not have to accept any of these future worlds under a false banner of liberty, be it that of unlimited reproductive rights or of unfettered scientific inquiry. We do not have to regard ourselves as slaves to inevitable technological progress when that progress does not serve human ends. True freedom means the freedom of political communities to protect the values they hold most dear, and it is that freedom that we need to exercise with regard to the biotechnology revolution today."

■ The Rev. John B. Chane, formerly dean in San Diego, has been elected the new Episcopal bishop of Washington, D.C. He is a champion of the ordination of women and non-celibate homosexuals, the blessing of same-sex unions, and the unlimited abortion license. In his talking about himself, the word "prophetic" pops up repeatedly. On social issues in San Diego, the *Washington Post* admiringly reports, Chane accused utilities of setting "immoral" rates, worked for free needle-exchange programs for drug addicts, and spoke out against what he called "the broad issues of racism, sexism, and homophobia." It has the makings of a movie: *A Prophet Goes to Washington*. And a humble prophet at that. When asked his greatest strength, he replied: "I love people. Of all the things I've done in parishes I've served and the cathedral, if you talk to the people, they will tell you I'm very much a people person and solid pastoral caregiver." That, mind you, is simply the chief of all the things he might have mentioned. "Bishop-Elect Bold From Start" is the headline of the next day's story in the *Post*. Upon his arrival in Washington he issued a "blunt challenge" to the assembled faithful, saying that they must give more generously "if I am to be the compassionate pastor, the engaged congregational visitor, the prophetic preacher and teacher that I believe you have called me to be." Compassion, engagement, and prophecy must be adequately funded. He explained that resources are necessary "to free your bishop from the administrative conundrums that have literally crucified so many

bishops in the Episcopal Church.” Episcopal bishops, and many of them, have been literally crucified? However much some curmudgeons might relish the thought, surely there is a law against that. The *Post* says that Chane “will take time to assess his new job, the diocese, and the Washington area before tackling new church issues, the city, or the federal government.” So the Episcopal Church, the city, and the nation have a little time to shape up before Bishop Chane unleashes his prophetic fury. Racists, sexists, homophobes, and persons favoring immoral utility rates have been put on notice. (Another successful placement by www.central_casting@ecusa.org.)

■ Here’s an entry for the Only in America Awards. Down in Powhatan, Virginia, there was Huguenot Academy, a private school established by white folk during the era of racial integration. There was also there a school established by Benedictine sisters for lonely Catholics in that part of the country, called Blessed Sacrament. I don’t know the details of how the merger came about, but the new name is wonderful: Blessed Sacrament Huguenot School. Maybe that’s what Paul Tillich had in mind when he spoke of combining Catholic substance and Protestant principle, even if the principal is Catholic.

■ On the wooden box containing twenty-five of these quite good cigars from Honduras is imprinted, “This Product Contains/Produces Chemicals Known to the State of California to Cause Cancer, and Birth Defects or Other Reproductive Harms.” That is fascinating. Not, of course, that cigars contain/produce chemicals that, taken in sufficient quantity, are damaging or even lethal. The same is true of Hershey chocolate bars or, for that matter, mother’s milk. No, the interesting thing is the notice that this fact is “known to the State of California.” If it is a fact, it is presumably known to others, including other states and maybe even the people of California. The notice does not say, “According to the State of California, this product, etc.” Nor does it say that “the State of California claims to know, etc.” At the same time, it seems unlikely that the State of California is making a claim to epistemic privilege, as though it knows something that others do not know. Rather, the State of California wants it to be known that it knows. It wants everybody to know that it knows, which is why boxes exported to, for instance, New York carry the notice. Perhaps California law requires the notice on boxes shipped to California, and it’s not worth the bother for the manufacturer to remove it from boxes shipped elsewhere. On the other hand, I would not be surprised if the California law stipulates that anyone shipping boxes there must put the notice on boxes shipped anywhere, just to make

sure that everyone knows that the State of California knows. One may wonder why the law requires the words “known to the State of California.” It might seem that the statement would be stronger if it flatly asserted that the product “is known to cause cancer, etc.” But then the State of California would not get credit for its heightened consciousness, which is the presumption of its campaign to californicate America. A constituent part of that effort is, of course, its antismoking crusade, in which it proudly claims to lead the country. Crusades are prone to excess, as, for instance, in California’s antismoking television ads aimed specifically against the smoking of cigars. They depicted a fellow who has seventy cigarettes stuffed in his mouth, with the message that smoking one cigar is equivalent to smoking seventy cigarettes. This backfired in a big way since people, knowing that smoking a cigar or two per day is a pretty temperate thing to do, concluded that smoking seventy cigarettes per day, never mind just a pack or two, must also be all right. But back to the box with the declaration about what is “known to the State of California.” Perhaps it is a claim to epistemic privilege. In that case, given the justifiably jaundiced view of most Americans toward the presumptions of California, the notice on the box may have the happy effect of enhancing respect for the much maligned cigar. (Voice from the peanut gallery: Don’t you have more serious things to write about? The answer is yes, and I admit that the foregoing item is an instance of whimsy in the service of procrastination—without, however, agreeing with the obviously misguided implication in the question that the cigar is not a subject deserving of serious reflection.)

■ The Virginia Military Institute, forced by court order a while back to go coed, is now under judicial fire for permitting a spoken (out loud!) prayer at dinner. According to the Associated Press, VMI’s lawyer explained to the federal judge that the prayer “is intended for development of military leaders, not for religious indoctrination.” VMI’s spokeswoman adds that the prayer is voluntary; students are given the opportunity to say a blessing but they are, she says, “to refrain from specific religious references.” A neat trick, if you can do it; like playing a game of sports in general. Law that requires people to say asinine things in defense of what should not need to be defended is, as the fellow said, an ass. VMI lost the case.

■ On First Avenue, around the corner from where I live, there are still posters to be seen: “Bloomberg wants to buy your vote for \$60 million. Vote for Mark Green.” Green narrowly lost the mayoral race. I suppose there were enough people who wanted that

\$60 million. They must be very disappointed. Actually, Michael Bloomberg is reported to have spent \$69 million on the race and—in response to a question frequently asked—a lot of us are disappointed. Not that much was expected. Bloomberg may be a fiscal conservative, but he's a social and cultural lefty and stridently pro-abortion. Of course, Rudy Giuliani was also pro-choice, but he invoked the excuse that there was not much a mayor could do about abortion. Bloomberg, by way of contrast, is in your face. With all the problems facing the city and its new mayor, one of his earliest acts was to require all the public teaching hospitals in the city to provide training in doing abortions. (Only two of the eleven public hospitals had made it standard for residents.) On a number of issues, including his treatment of racial charlatans like Al Sharpton as big time players, Bloomberg appears to be reversing the Giuliani course. Of course, that might give a boost to Sharpton's presidential ambitions for 2004, which would make for great political theater. As for the future of the city, however, some thoughtful New Yorkers are referring to Mayor Doomberg.

■ I don't know what this does to the law that says where orthodoxy is optional it will sooner or later be proscribed, but it is an odd twist. It depends, I suppose, on whether the witch cult called Wiccan qualifies as a kind of orthodoxy. In any event, Mary LeBlanc of Houston joined the Unitarian Fellowship because it "welcomes persons of every religious belief." It seems the fellowship was too welcoming of her beliefs, wanting her to teach other members how to perform Wiccan rituals. Wiccans, however, practice a form of what might be called closed communion. Ms. LeBlanc states that "only those who are priests or priestesses of the religion may perform this ritual and that it was highly offensive for someone who is not a member of that religion to do public performance of one of their rites." The next thing she knew, she received a letter from the fellowship notifying her that she "was evicted from membership." Not only that, but members began to harass her and call her "a humpbacked, toothless, redneck hillbilly witch." Her lawsuit against the fellowship, claiming millions of dollars in damages, charges that members have acted "with great venom and spite" and have thereby inflicted "emotional distress." Let the excommunicated Ms. LeBlanc stand as a warning to anyone thinking of joining up with an open-minded spiritual fellowship that welcomes persons of any and every religious belief.

■ A chillingly instructive book is Nicholas Wade's *Life Script: How the Human Genome Discoveries Will Transform Medicine and Enhance Your Health*. Genomic technologies will proceed, he writes, in "three

overlapping waves of innovation which can be called conventional, germ-line, and life-extending." The conventional seems fairly innocent, involving "gene chips" that will enhance individual medical treatment. Germ-line manipulation is spookier; it involves making genetic changes that will be passed on from generation to generation. The third, life-extending, means increasing the "natural" life span to, say, two hundred years or more. That is part of the "immortality project" about which Leon Kass has written so persuasively in these pages (see "L'Chaim and Its Limits: Why Not Immortality?" May 2001). Adam Wolfson, who has a key staff position with the President's Council on Bioethics, discusses how the questions raised by Wade can be publicly deliberated and decided. It will not be easy, he suggests, given the widespread values of "nonjudgmentalism" and "equality," and the credulity toward science that is aptly called "scientism." He writes, "Modern science, whose overriding goal is the conquest of the blind forces of nature, is now itself considered a blind force beyond human control." Four hundred years ago, Francis Bacon wrote that the aim of science is "the relief of man's estate." In *The Great Instauration* he warned: "Lastly, I would address one general admonition to all; that they consider what are the true ends of knowledge, and that they seek it . . . but for the benefit and use of life; and that they perfect and govern it in charity." Wolfson comments: "In today's secularized culture, it is increasingly difficult to insist, as Bacon once did, that scientists should be governed by a religious or ethical norm like charity. Such a norm is dismissed as the residue of a faded religious faith, a faith that must not be forced on nonbelievers, or a humanism that has been discredited." But that is precisely what the President's Council, and all of us, must insist upon. In a democracy in which more than 90 percent of the people believe in God and what, however confusedly, they call objective moral values (which, pressed not very hard, turn out to be religiously grounded), why on earth should a small minority of atheists be allowed to claim that their presuppositions are the norm for public deliberation? There is no reason whatever for the rest of us to go along with their attempt at an intellectual coup d'état. They are free to try to persuade of us the truth of their presuppositions. Failing that, they are free to find a society that agrees with them. But in a democratic polity, it is we the people, locked in civil argument and contending for what we hold to be true, who are to deliberate and decide the great questions bearing on our common future. That, at least, is the theory, and it is the duty of the President's Council, and all of us, to try to make it the practice as well.

■ In his two-part effusion in the *New York Review of Books* on what is wrong with the idea of intelligent design and those who advocate it (“Saving Us from Darwin”), Frederick Crews takes some cracks at this journal and the *New Criterion*, but, given what he takes to be our editorial biases, he’s not much surprised. He writes, “The case of *Commentary* looks more significant, however, because the magazine is published by the American Jewish Committee and is much concerned with defending Jewish beliefs and affinities.” To those to whom the connection between Darwin and Jewish beliefs and affinities may not be immediately obvious, Crews explains that intelligent designers such as Phillip Johnson and William Dembski are really Christians. Like they really believe that stuff. He got the goods on Dembski, who, he reveals, has written that all truths “find their completion in Christ.” Crews goes on to note, however, that *Commentary* has a track record of giving a pass to “the evangelical right” in order to secure its neoconservative political alliances. An early instance of that was a 1985 article I did for *Commentary*, “What Do the Fundamentalists Want?”, that went so far as to suggest that even people such as Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell are American citizens who have a right to take part in the political process. What all this has to do with Darwin and intelligent design may elude some readers, but for the record, *Commentary*’s problem, if that is what it is, is not with the “religious right” but more specifically with Catholicism. In recent years it has repeatedly taken its cudgel to beat up on Pius XII for his putative silence about the Holocaust, has favorably reviewed slash-and-burn anti-Catholic polemicists such as James Carroll, and, most recently, has trashed Jewish-Christian (meaning mainly Catholic) theological dialogue, which, we are given to understand, threatens to reduce hostility between Jews and Christians and thus encourage Jewish conversions to Christianity. So Crews may be on to something about “Jewish beliefs and affinities,” at least as those are represented by *Commentary*, but it is by no means clear what that has to do with the growing criticism, on both philosophical and scientific grounds, of Darwinism. Nonetheless, for an all-stops-pulled and entertainingly wrongheaded assault on the critics, you might want to check out “Saving Us from Darwin.”

■ You advised someone not to have an abortion? Be careful. Be very careful. You may be engaged in criminal activity. The National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARAL) has enlisted the support of New York’s attorney general, Elliot Spitzer, in claiming that crisis pregnancy centers are violating the law by “advising persons on medical options without being licensed to do so.” There are

thousands of such centers around the country, and more than a hundred in New York. Most offer adoption services, placement into maternity homes, free prenatal care, free ultrasounds, free counseling, and free child care supplies and other help after the child is born. And yes, they encourage women not to have an abortion. “This attack,” says Chris Slattery, founder of Expectant Mother Care, “could have ripple effects nationwide. If they can successfully ban counseling by volunteer lay people, this could spread across the country and literally cripple the movement that is the heart and soul of compassionate abortion alternatives counseling.” Slattery’s organization and others are launching a vigorous legal defense, and for that they need money. Write Expectant Mother Care, 210 East 23rd St., 5th Floor, New York, New York 10010.

■ The clock is ticking, and many in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee are counting the days, the hours, and even the minutes before Archbishop Rembert Weakland has to submit his resignation at twelve noon on his seventy-fifth birthday. I am told that the champagne bottles will be popped at 12:01 p.m. upon receiving the fax from Rome that the resignation is accepted. Truth to tell, I’ve always had something of a soft spot for the Archbishop. He’s liberally daffy but more amusingly candid than most of that persuasion. Of course he has a very high opinion of himself, but he’s never tried to hide it. I particularly liked his public statement that he would have made a great Bishop of Salzburg in the time of Mozart but ended up as Bishop of Milwaukee in the time of rock and roll. There’s something perversely refreshing about a bishop who doesn’t mind saying that he’s too good for the people he’s called to serve. Or consider his essay in *The Catholic Church, Morality, and Politics*, an interesting collection of readings in moral theology just published by Paulist Press. The Archbishop takes off from my book, *The Catholic Moment*, and his point is that it’s not going to happen—and a very good thing, too. He does not share my hopes for cooperation with evangelical Protestants, or what he calls “the religious right.” “In fact,” he writes, “most Catholics are leery of that movement, seeing it as narrow-minded and even dangerous. If at times the position of the United States Conference of Roman Catholic bishops coincides with that of the religious right, it does so out of totally different theological premises.” Totally different? Like the premise that Jesus Christ is Lord? Or that human beings, born and unborn, are a gift from God and are to be legally protected? Or the Apostles’ Creed? The Archbishop is a cultivated cultured man (he is, in fact, an accomplished musician), and he is not going to let all that cultivation be compromised by

association with those fundies. He also has some very decided ideological views: "The tenets of the politically neoconservative thinkers in the United States, of which group Father Neuhaus is one of the most compelling exponents, are not shared by the majority of American Catholics. The latter do not expect a political Catholic moment to come about through the coalescence of Catholic social teaching, as taught by Pope John Paul II, with a neoconservative agenda. Nor do they expect that this combination will then be embraced by the religious right. They do not accept that the neoconservative agenda is consonant with the teachings of the present Pope or consistent with Catholic social tradition." The Archbishop's confidence that the Catholic moment can be warded off rests on his assessment of the Catholic circumstance in this country. "What militates most against a Catholic moment, however, is the lack of cohesiveness among Catholics themselves in the United States." He writes that Mass attendance has fallen off, that there is "disagreement among Catholics about what they believe, especially in the area of moral teaching," and that most Catholics "are almost totally illiterate about the teachings, history, and traditions of their faith." He concludes, "They are independent and critical thinkers." I am sure the Archbishop does not mean to say that it is a good thing that most Catholics are lax in practice and religiously illiterate. But that seems to be the causal connection with their being "independent and critical thinkers," which he clearly does think is a good thing. And laxity and illiteracy do serve the useful purpose of militating against the chances of there being anything like a Catholic moment, which he considers a very good thing. As I say, the clock is ticking. I do not say that I will miss Rembert Weakland, since he has declared that, with retirement, he will have even more time for engaging the great issues of Church and society. We would be the poorer without his voice of curmudgeonly reaction against the failure of the revolution that he mistakenly thought was declared by the Second Vatican Council. Such voices are becoming ever more rare and should be cherished, if for no other reason than to remind us of how things used to be before people sensed the promise of a Catholic moment.

■ What a century it was. In 1910 a great Protestant missionary conference was held in Edinburgh to plan the evangelization of the world. Fourteen hundred delegates gathered, only eighteen of whom were not from Europe or North America. There was not one African. The assumption, understandably, was that world evangelization meant the expansion of Western Christianity to the rest of the world. Historian Mark Noll of Wheaton College comments: "What actually

happened was dramatically different. The surprises as well as the magnitude of developments in the twentieth-century history of Christianity can be illustrated by considering a series of comparisons for present realities of this past week:

- Last Sunday it is probable that more believers attended church in China than in all of so-called Christian Europe.

- Last Sunday more Anglicans attended church in each of Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda than did Anglicans in Britain and Episcopalians in the United States combined—and the number of Anglicans at church in Nigeria was several times the number in these other African countries.

- Last Sunday more Presbyterians were at church in Ghana than in Scotland, and more were at church in the Uniting Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa than in the United States.

- Last Sunday more members of the Assemblies of God in Brazil were in church than the combined total of the Assemblies of God and the Church of God in Christ in the United States.

- Last Sunday more people attended the Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul (Pastor Paul Young-gi Cho) than attended all of the churches in significant American denominations like the Christian Reformed Church, the Evangelical Free Church, or the Presbyterian Church in America.

- Last Sunday, Roman Catholics in the United States probably worshiped in more languages than at any previous time in American history.

- Last Sunday the churches with the largest attendance in England and France had mostly black congregations."

Careful historians such as Noll are generally nervous about making generalizations, but he takes a stab at it: "If it were possible to summarize the momentous changes in world Christianity over the course of the twentieth century, five themes might emerge: First, the decline of Christianity in Europe, as a result of a steady erosion in Western Europe and the traumatic clash with communism in Eastern Europe. Second, the renovation of the Roman Catholic Church, symbolized

by the Second Vatican Council, to reflect both cultural conditions of the modern world and the growing presence of the Two-Thirds World in the Church (which now numbers about one billion adherents). Third, the displacement among Protestants of Britain and Germany as the driving agents of Christian expansion by the United States. Fourth, the expansion of Christianity into many regions where the Christian presence had been minimal or nonexistent, including China, Korea, many parts of India, and much of Africa. Fifth, a change in the pressing issues bearing down upon the Christian heartland, from the jaded discontents of advanced Western civilization to the raw life-and-death struggles of poverty, disease, and tribal warfare in non-Western civilizations." It certainly isn't what the folks at Edinburgh in 1910 expected, writes Noll, but "what actually happened was much more unexpected, much more intriguing, much more threatening, much more complex, and much more an occasion for praising the Lord who sent his witnesses 'to the ends of the earth.'"

■ Shmuley Boteach, who, it says here, is a "practicing rabbi," is also the author of very popular books, such as *Kosher Sex*, which has sold over 1.5 million copies. Here's an ad for his latest, *Judaism for Everyone: Renewing Your Life through the Vibrant Lessons of the Jewish Faith*. (It seems the focus group came up with so many buzz words that they decided to use them all in the title.) The Rabbi writes, "Sex is the holiest human experience, the highest form of knowledge." Holier than studying Torah? Higher than the knowledge of G-d? His fans eagerly await next year's hot offering, *Kosher Idolatry*.

■ "Can't you get through an issue without quoting Chesterton?" asks a reader in Chicago. The answer is that it's not easy. The Chicago critic can skip this item from GKC's *Orthodoxy*, but I expect others will relish its wisdom and its pertinence to our present world circumstance, even if they might quibble over the slight to Eastern monasticism. We should, suggests Chesterton, be more careful than we usually are when we speak about Christianity being monotheistic: "If we take any other doctrine that has been called old-fashioned we shall find the case the same. It is the same, for instance, in the deep matter of the Trinity. Unitarians (a sect never to be mentioned without a special respect for their distinguished intellectual dignity and high intellectual honor) are often reformers by the accident that throws so many small sects into such an attitude. But there is nothing in the least liberal or akin to reform in the substitution of pure monotheism for the Trinity. The complex God of the Athanasian Creed may be an enigma for the

intellect; but He is far less likely to gather the mystery and cruelty of a Sultan than the lonely god of Omar or Mahomet. The god who is a mere awful unity is not only a king but an Eastern king. The heart of humanity, especially of European humanity, is certainly much more satisfied by the strange hints and symbols that gather round the Trinitarian idea, the image of a council at which mercy pleads as well as justice, the conception of a sort of liberty and variety existing even in the inmost chamber of the world. For Western religion has always felt keenly the idea 'it is not well for man to be alone.' The social instinct asserted itself everywhere as when the Eastern idea of hermits was practically expelled by the Western idea of monks. So even asceticism became brotherly; and the Trappists were sociable even when they were silent. If this love of a living complexity be our test, it is certainly healthier to have the Trinitarian religion than the Unitarian. For to us Trinitarians (if I may say it with reverence)—to us God Himself is a society. It is indeed a fathomless mystery of theology, and even if I were theologian enough to deal with it directly, it would not be relevant to do so here. Suffice it to say here that this triple enigma is as comforting as wine and open as an English fireside; that this thing that bewilders the intellect utterly quiets the heart: but out of the desert, from the dry places and the dreadful suns, come the cruel children of the lonely God; the real Unitarians who with scimitar in hand have laid waste the world. For it is not well for God to be alone."

■ John Dewey died in 1952, writes a reader, and Deweyism had expired long before that. The complaint is about my giving extensive attention to Dewey in "The American Mind" (Public Square, December 2001). There I am appreciatively critical of Louis Menand's *The Metaphysical Club*, pointing out that his version of pragmatism as *the American philosophy* went out with the whimper of Dewey's 1934 tract, *A Common Faith*. Dewey correctly saw that his god of democracy could not be sustained without a religious faith, or its functional equivalent. Since it is hard to sell people on a religion that is presented as a functional equivalent of religion, Dewey bit the bullet and called his "common faith" a religion. In doing that, he offended some of his more militantly secularist friends, and ended up converting almost nobody to his very uncommon faith. While Dewey's project flopped, the idea persists that our society needs shared values and beliefs that are held with religious intensity, and that Christianity or even the Judeo-Christian moral tradition cannot, for various reasons, supply that need. That idea was prominent in what a few years ago was called the communitarian movement championed by Amitai Etzioni, and is

evident in Alan Wolfe's blithe diagnosis of American culture's religion of Nonjudgmentalism. John Dewey is also very much alive in Eldon Eisenach's *The Next Religious Establishment: National Identity and Political Theology in Post-Protestant America* (Rowman & Littlefield). Once again, the assumption is that no religious tradition is inclusive enough to nurture the diverse values of a pluralistic society. What was called mainline Protestantism once tried to do that, and succeeded more or less, but that is history. What is needed now, says Eisenach, is a new "Protestantism without Christianity." This will require a post-Christian "national theology," and the only institutions that can produce and disseminate such a theology are the university and, to a lesser extent, the public school. One might note in passing that much of American Protestantism is already and very effectively attending to the job of supplying Protestantism without Christianity. The more pertinent point, however, is that Eisenach's "next religious establishment" is John Dewey's "common faith" redivivus. The belief that the contemporary university—run largely by a privileged and self-indulgent elite as a hothouse for the cultivation of resentments against the American experience—can provide a belief system for the guiding and sustaining of this society is, well, not very believable. I see, however, that in the current issue of *Theology Today*, Peter J. Paris of Princeton Theological Seminary has a very different take on Eisenach's proposal. "This," he concludes, "is a novel book that greatly advances the current discourse about public religion and national identity." That judgment may or may not say something about post-Christian Protestantism at Princeton. In any event, *The Next Religious Establishment* is as novel as John Dewey's *Common Faith*, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's "civil religion," or the religious establishment imposed by the *Directoire* of the French Revolution. The fabrication of new religions is a perennial project of activist intellectuals who have been and predictably will be frustrated by the disinclination of people to take their religion from their presumed betters, and by the continuing inconvenience of the vitality of Christianity.

■ These telephone sales pitches are irritating enough without the stranger at the other end calling me by my first name. I sometimes respond that I didn't know we were acquainted, and perhaps he would be so kind as to remind me of his name and where we met. I realize that may be a bit snooty, since the poor guy, or gal, is probably instructed to presume. (A graduate student at Harvard to John Kenneth Galbraith: "Do your friends call you John?" Galbraith, looking down from the heights: "My friends call me Kenneth. You may call me Professor Galbraith.") The purpose of the

foregoing is to introduce this by Roger Scruton from "Real Men Have Manners" in *City Journal*: "In a world organized and disciplined by manners . . . strangers could have confidence in one another. They did not feel threatened in the street or in public gatherings; they negotiated their passage with relaxed, easy gestures. Take manners away, and public space becomes threatening, relations take on a provisional aspect, and people feel naked and exposed. In the absence of manners, law is not the only recourse. You can try to preempt conflict by pretending that you are not living among strangers at all. Thus arises a substitute for manners that, while it generates an inferior ideal of human life, nevertheless enables us to avoid the worst of our frictions. This substitute is informality. Where manners prevail, people stand at a certain distance from one another. They hold themselves in reserve—in just the way that courtship holds sex in reserve. Such reserve does not diminish the value of intimacy but, on the contrary, augments it by raising it to the level of a gift. The loss of manners implies that true intimacy is less and less obtainable, since less and less is there the condition with which intimacy is contrasted and from which it gains its meaning. Instead, a pretense of intimacy has arisen, enabling people to deal with one another not as strangers but as friends—at least until the word or deed that initiates the lawsuit. Familiarity, then, is both an offense to good manners and a substitute for them, a way of getting others to your side with the speed and impersonality of a transaction on the stock exchange. Modern business therefore depends upon familiarity. The person who insists on antique forms and courtesies is on his way to early retirement. Hence in the world of business and the professions, there is much affectation of friendship but very little friendship. Paradoxically, the loss of manners, rather than abolishing hypocrisy, has created a vast realm of pretense." Admittedly, Scruton is from the UK, where manners are often confused with mannerisms, but his complaint is a welcome antidote to the fake friendships that would deprive people of the pleasure of becoming friends.

■ The sad truth is that many people who should be reading FT, who would be if they knew about it, don't. You can help to remedy this state of affairs by sending us the names of such people. We will be glad to send them a free copy, indicating that they are recommended by you. Please send names and addresses to FIRST THINGS, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, New York 10010 (or e-mail to subscriberservices@pma-inc.net). On the other hand, if they're ready to subscribe, call toll free 1-877-905-9920, or visit www.firstthings.com.

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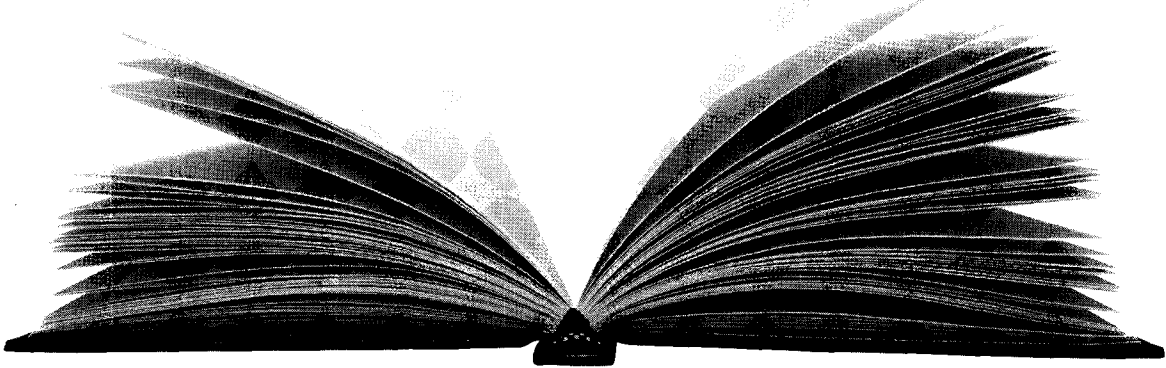
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